THE ART OF DEFENCE IN CHESS

Lyev Polugayevsky
and
Iakov Damsky

PERGAMON PRESS

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by

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and
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Translated by Kenneth P. Neat

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Symbols

+	check
x	a capture
!	a very good move
!!	a brilliant move
?	an error
??	a blunder
!?	a move deserving attention
?!	a dubious or risky move

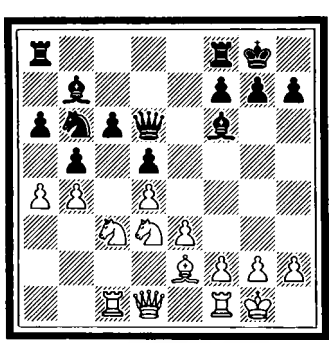
Introduction

Remember how sword fights are arranged in films. In the course of battle every noble hero — whether he be D'Artagnan, Cirano de Bergerac or someone else — inevitably stumbles, falls and . . . after avoiding a fatal sword blow, swiftly leaps up in order to display his skill in a prolonged fencing exchange. Exactly the same can happen in chess. Yes, on encountering a prepared variation you have lost the opening battle or have simply not managed to equalize with Black. Yes, you have been outplayed by your experienced opponent in positional manoeuvring, or committed a vexing transposition of moves, or have not guessed in time the opponent's plan, or have simply been careless — and now your position, as the commentators politely say, gives serious cause for alarm. In a word, by analogy with the cinema you are lying on your back and you are about to be pierced by the sharp steel blade . . .

Do not despair: you have one last chance. And not such a slight one as might be imagined. This chance is defence. Passive, active, combinational . . . It is an essential and highly important component in the game of any player, and it is no accident that even some highly talented players, who have idolized only attack to the detriment of defensive mastery, have failed to achieve that which they could well have expected, given their level of talent and degree of true love for chess. Therefore masters and grandmasters, notable in their youth for their sharp attacking style, but, as Botvinnik puts it, capable of self-reprogramming, in maturity have demonstrated, even if perhaps not through choice, examples of tenacious and reliable defence. Evidence of this is provided by the game extracts given below by such devotees of attack as Tal, Ljubojevic, Vaganian, and others.

It stands to reason that by defence alone the present-day chess throne cannot be won.

The time has long since passed when Steinitz, for the sake of the triumph of his theory of positional play, deliberately avoided positive action and in voluntarily chosen defence exploited the strategic incompetence of his attacking opponents. In our day the basis of success is nevertheless offensive play. But aiming for it contrary to the demands of the position, neglecting defence for the sake of illusory activity, is just as punishable as any other mistake, even the most serious. An example is provided by the 11th game of the **Karpov - Spassky** Candidates Semi-Final Match, Leningrad, 1974.



White stands slightly better. He controls more space, and after a4-a5 and the invasion of his knight at c5, the weakness of the a6 pawn may cause Black some trouble. Nevertheless, according to Botvinnik, "after 17 . . . Nc4! 18 Nc5 Rab8 Black could have put up a successful defence".

But the ex-World Champion decided to obtain counterplay against the white king, for which he transferred his bishop to c7. There followed **17 . . . Bd8?** We will again hand over to Botvinnik, who annotated this game:

"The primary cause of Black's defeat. It turns out that Spassky is unfamiliar with the basic subtleties of such positions. Black's main problem is to prevent e3-e4. Therefore, as long as his bishop is attacking the d4 pawn, he can feel secure. Now, however, Karpov makes a breakthrough in the centre and begins a decisive offensive".

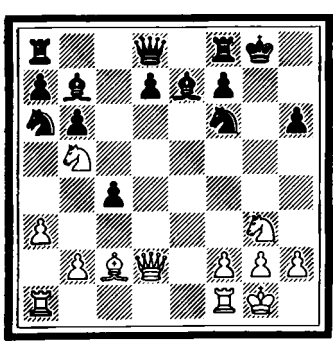
18 Nc5 Bc8 19 a5 Bc7 20 g3 Nc4 21 e4 Bh3 22 Re1, and White's initiative, especially after the incautious **22 . . . dxe4,** quickly became decisive.

Thus the neglect of defence and an unfounded aim to transform a 'passive' bishop into an 'active' one led to the defeat of a highly experienced and versatile player . . .

The number of such examples is endless. As,

however, are those where, by timely arranged defence, one side neutralizes an advantage gained by the opponent. It was no accident that Alekhine once remarked that to defeat him you had to win a game against him three times: first in the opening, then in the middlegame, and finally in the endgame.

Disregarding the somewhat controversial nature of this assertion we must nevertheless agree with the opinion of the combinational genius that there is a defence in many positions which appear hopeless. Even where games have concluded in a crushing win for one player, in a good half of the cases the analysts have later found adequate defensive resources.



This position arose in a famous game **Bronstein - Keres,** which was awarded the first brilliancy prize in the Göteborg Interzonal Tournament, 1955. White has boldly sacrificed two pawns followed by a bishop at h6, and after **15 ... Nh7? 16 Qxh6 f5 17 Nxf5 Rxf5 18 Bxf5** he practically restored the material balance while retaining a very strong attack. After soon picking up two more pawns, he won the game on move 39.

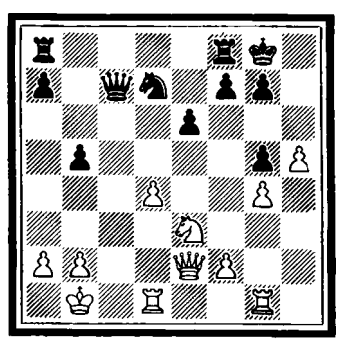
Meanwhile, Black could have put up a successful defence. To do this he should have brought up his queenside pieces to the decisive part of the battlefield — the centre! After 15 ... Nc5! 16 Rae1 (in the event of *16 Qxh6 Be4 17 Nf5 Ne8* the attack can be regarded as parried) 16 ... Nd3 17 Bxd3 (forced, since *17 Qxh6 Ne8 18 Re5 f5* is worse) 17 ... cxd3 18 Nf5 Be4 19 Nbd4 Re8 20 Nxh6+ (after *20 Qxh6 Bf8 21 Qg5+ Kh8 22 Re3 Nh7* the attack peters out) 20 ... Kf8 21 Qg5 Bg6! (the apparently natural *21 ... d5?* loses to *22 Rxe4! dxe4 23 Ne6+! fxe6 24 Qg6*) 22 Rxe7! Rxe7 *(22 ... Qxe7* is bad because of *23 Nhf5)* 23 Qxf6 Re4 24 Qh8+ Ke7 25 Nhf5+ Bxf5 26 Nxf5+ Ke6 27 Qh3 Qh8! 28 Qxd3 Qe5 his chances would have been preferable.

Defences have also been

found against some of Alekhine's brilliant combinations, and against many of Tal's intuitive sacrifices, and in Anderssen's famous 'immortal' and 'evergreen' games. And although this in no way belittles the genuine unsurpassed beauty of all these works of chess art, it must inspire faith in the devotees of defence: in principle a saving manoeuvre, move or plan may be found not a day, a week or a year later, but directly at the board, during the game.

Undoubtedly, this is not easy. And besides, while a mistake by the offensive side will not necessarily lead to defeat — perhaps only to a slowing in the tempo of the attack or the loss of the initiative, an error in defence is normally fatal. "Experience shows that errors occur more often in defence than in attack, especially where the defence demands extreme care", Rudolf Spielmann rightly remarked nearly half a century ago in his classic *The Art of Sacrifice in Chess*. But firstly, this lends added satisfaction to a well organized and implemented defence, and secondly, for whom is chess an easy game?! . . . In that same Bronstein - Keres game, we saw how on several occasions White had the possibility of inopportunely capturing the h6 pawn, and how much ingenuity would have been demanded of him to maintain his attack against correct defence by the opponent . . .

With a further example of resourceful defence, which saved a game and, in our opinion, won a match, we will continue this introduction, which has perhaps become a little prolonged, but which is absolutely essential . . .



This is from the same **Spassky** - **Karpov** match referred to above. It was the eighth game, with the score standing at 2-1 in favour of the young challenger (the winner was the first to score 4 wins), but in this position he stood so badly that in the press

centre a 'consultation' of two ex-World Champions, Euwe and Tal, 'actively supported' by grandmasters Bondarevsky, Taimanov, Timman and Kotov, predicted for Black a 'swift end'.

Indeed, had White prosaically captured the pawn — 23 Qxb5 Rab8 24 Qe2 Rb4 25 Rd2 Rfb8 26 Rc1 Qf4 27 d5! Nb6 28 d6, he would have had every chance of winning. But an attack is always more attractive, and there followed:

23 d5 a6!

Amazing coolness: the pawn is defended, and 'all' that White has left is his attack.

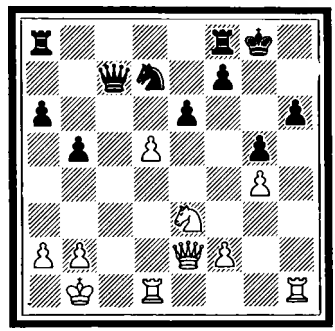
24 h6

It was this move that formed the basis of the aforementioned 'diagnosis' in the press centre . . .

24 . . . gxh6

Practically forced, since Black's king cannot 'sit it out' under the cover of the white pawn: 24 . . . g6 25 dxe6 fxe6 26 Nf5!, when he loses after both 26 . . . exf5 27 Qe6+ Rf7 28 Qxg6+ Kf8 29 h7, and 26 . . . Rae8 27 h7+! Kxh7 28 Rxd7+ Qxd7 29 Rh1+ Kg8 30 Qe5.

25 Rh1



What is Black to do? He seems bound to defend the h6 pawn, since the opening of the h-file looks fatal. But on 25 . . . Kg7 White had prepared a blow of terrible strength — 26 f4!!. when no satisfactory defence is apparent. After 26 . . . gxf4 27 Qh2 Rh8 28 Ng2 e5 29 Nh4 the knight decisively joins the attack, while in the event of 26 . . . Qxf4 27 dxe6 the undefended state of the black knight again allows its white opponent to break through to f5 *(27 . . . Qe4+ 28 Ka1 Qxe6 29 Nf5+)*. Finally, after 26 . . . Nf6 27 dxe6 fxe6 28 f5 White succeeds in seizing the most important squares in the vicinity of the black king — in particular, once again f5 . . .

25 . . . Nf6!!

With the effect of an exploding bomb! Black prophylactically removes the knight

from a possible attack, at the same time bringing it into the front defensive line. And the h6 pawn? ... Black has calculated that for it he will gain a highly important tempo in the battle for the h-file — the file of attack.

26 Rxh6

White also has nothing forcing after the alternative 26 d6 Qc6! (not allowing the white queen to go to f3) 27 f3 Kg7 28 Qh2 Rh8 29 Qe5 Qxf3!, with the threat of 30 ... Qe4+.

26 ... Kg7

This tempo allows Black to meet 27 Rdh1 with 27 ... Rh8, with saving exchanges.

27 Rhh1 Rad8
28 dxe6 fxe6
29 Nc2

Threatening both the capture on e6, and the deadly 30 Nd4. Black still appears to stand badly, but ...

29 ... Qf4!

Yet another excellent defensive reply. The advance of the white knight is prevented, and for the moment the loss of the pawn can be disregarded: 30 Rxd8 Rxd8 31 Qxe6 Qe4! leads to the rapid restoration of equilibrium. In Botvinnik's opinion: "The worst is now over for Black".

30 f3 Kf7
31 a3 e5!

Beginning to eliminate his pawn weaknesses.

32 Nb4 e4
33 fxe4 Rxd1+
34 Rxd1 Re8!

That's it! The defence is successfully completed, whereas, the hasty 34 ... Qxg4?! 35 Qxg4 Nxg4 36 Rf1+ Kg7 37 Rg1 would still have given Black some unpleasant moments in the endgame. The game concluded:

35 Nxa6 Qxe4+
36 Qxe4 Rxe4
37 Nc7 b4
38 axb4

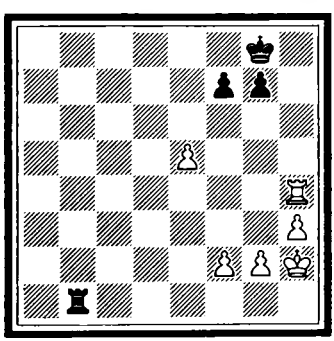
Or 38 a4 b3 39 a5 Rxg4 40 a6 Ra4 41 Rd3 Ne4!

38 ... Rxb4 39 Rf1 Rf4 Draw agreed.

Black's defence had such a strong psychological effect on his opponent that the match lasted only another three games ...

There are many convincing examples of how, even in games with opponents of equal strength, leading players have achieved their aim by tenacious defence. They will be given in the

sections relating to the appropriate typical defensive procedure. Here we should like to mention another practical example, characterized by the fact tnat the weaker side's play was in accordance with all the rules of chess warfare: taking account of all conceivable nuances, clinging to literally every 'entrenchment' in the defending position ... Yes, the story of the adjourned game **Reshevsky - Geller,** Candidates Tournament, Zurich 1953, is very instructive



It will be sensible for us to read the account by Geller, who tenaciously defended at each of the possible lines.

"It stands to reason that the outcome of the game is decided. Therefore Reshevsky looked especially pleased after the envelope with the adjourned position had been handed to the controller. Shortly before the resumption he even enquired as to whether I might not be intending to resign without playing on. And on arriving at the tournament hall he demonstratively ordered a coffee, asked for a spoon, and began stirring in some sugar.

Meanwhile, in our adjournment analysis Yuri Averbakh and I had found as many as three ideas which gave Black hopes of saving the game. The first was to try and obtain an ending with f- and h-pawns for White, in which, as is known, there are a number of drawn positions. The second was to search for a position where White's two extra pawns would be blockaded. The third — a fantastic one — was to play for stalemate! The resumption showed that, while Reshevsky had somehow reckoned with the first two possibilities, he had not even considered the third.

41 ...	**Re1**
42 f4	**Re3**
43 Rg4	**Kh7**
44 Rg3	**Re2**
45 h4?	

An imperceptable but serious mistake. Reshevsky thought that he could win as he pleased, and did not even

imagine how difficult his task would become after such a careless weakening of the g4 square. He should have freed his king by moving his rook from g3.

45 ... Re4
46 Rf3 f6

This exchange is possible only thanks to White's mistake on the previous move. Black aims to establish control over g4, not allowing White to set up a pawn phalanx.

47 exf6 gxf6
48 Kg3

On 48 g4 Black had prepared 48 . . . f5, leaving White with a choice: either an ending with f- and h-pawns, or — after 49 g5 Kg6 — passed g- and h-pawns blockaded, and the win more than problematic.

48 ... Kg6
49 Ra3 f5

Black has achieved a great deal: his pieces are active, and the white pawns are immobilized. Now the only way for Reshevsky to win was by 50 Ra8!, aiming for the following deployment of his forces: the white rook goes to g5, then the pawn advances to h5 and the king to h4. During this Black is obliged to keep his king at h6 and his rook on the 5th rank. Then comes g2(g3)-g4, when Black cannot interpose a saving check in order to go into an ending with f- and h-pawns.

Reshevsky evidently decided that he could arrive at the same position by a different, more forcing way. But it was here that a surprise awaited him.

50 Ra6+ Kh5
51 Rf6

Black seems doomed, but his king is too restricted!

51 ... Re3+
52 Kf2 Ra3
53 g3

White knows that after 53 Rxf5+ Kxh4 one of the drawn positions with blocked pawns is reached, but he is quite happy with the proximity of his planned set-up after 53 . . . Ra5 54 Kg2 Rb5 55 Kh3 Ra5 56 Rf8 Rb5 57 Rg8 Kh6 58 Rg5 Ra5 59 h5, then 60 Kh4 and 61 g4.

53 ... Rf3+!

The bomb explodes. If he takes the rook immediately or after 54 Kg2 Rxg3+, Black announces . . . stalemate! I have to admit that here I allowed myself a little bit of revenge, which was so picturesquely descibed in the newspapers and magazines

of that time. While Reshevsky stared at the board, stupefied, I ordered a glass of tea and, just as painstakingly as he had done earlier, began stirring in some sugar . . .

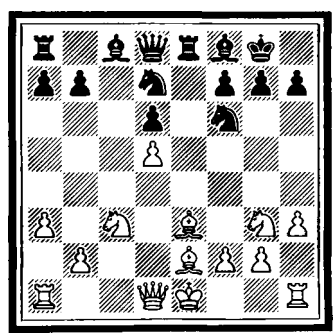
54 Ke2· Rxg3
55 Rxf5+ Kxh4

Now everything is clear. Both kings are cut off from the pawn, and its unsupported advance leads to full material equality."

56 Kf2 Ra3 57 Rg5 Rb3 58 Rg1 Kh5 59 Ke2 Ra3 **60 f5 Ra5** Draw agreed.

But tenacity in defence is a purely competitive feature, and the chess content of defence can be highly diverse. Time-approved defensive procedures are considered in the corresponding sections of the book. Of course, they are almost always interconnected: for example, passive defence gives way to the elimination of the opponent's attacking potential, or through simplification one can arrive at the creation of a fortress or at stalemate. Therefore an acquaintance with defensive 'themes' will help a player during a game to recognize the conditions for employing particular tactics or a particular procedure.

It is simply not possible for them all to occur within a single game. Here, nevertheless, is a game in which, as if to order, Black demonstrates a large number of purely defensive ideas. Here we will merely designate them, in order to examine them in more detail later.



A position by no means new to theory arose from the Nimzo-Indian Defence in the game **Kasparov - Andersson,** Moscow 'Tournament of Stars', 1981. It was simply Black's plan that was not altogether usual: to voluntarily spend the entire game defending.

13 . . . Rxe3!?

By sacrificing the exchange (the first defensive procedure) for White's (future) central striker, Black at the same time guarantees himself perma-

nent control of e5, which enables him to blockade (the second defensive procedure!) the centre and White's kingside.

14 fxe3 g6
15 O—O Qe7
16 Qd4 Bg7
17 Qf4 Ne8

Passive defence, allowing Black to commence blockading action. After the outwardly more active 17 . . . Ne5, the d6 pawn would have been inadequately supported and the knight at f6 not too secure. Now, in addition, the invasion square c7 is prophylactically defended . . .

18 Rac1 Be5
19 Qf2 Ndf6
20 Bd3 h5

Of course, this is not an attacking move, but simply . . . prophylaxis. The possible advance of the white g-pawn to g5 with control over f6 is now nipped in the bud. And, given the opportunity, Black intends to strengthen the blockade on the dark squares, by placing his pawn at h4 and hence controlling g3.

21 Nge2 Nh7

Preparing a prophylactic defence of the slightly weakened g6 pawn.

22 Nf4 Nf8
23 Nb5 a6
24 Nd4 Bd7

It would have been a bad mistake to exchange on d4. The doubling of White's pawns would have been an insignificant price to pay for the lifting of the blockade and the increased activity of his pieces.

25 Rc2 Bg7

Black continues to maintain the status quo.

26 Qg3 Rb8

In anticipation of an attack on the b7 pawn — which will happen sooner or later — Black prophylactically defends it.

27 Re2 Nf6
28 Nf3 Be8!

By overprotecting his g6, Black forestalls a possible sacrifice here with a strong attack.

29 e4

Convinced that there is no prospect of an attack on g6, White switches to the idea of the e4-e5 breakthrough.

29 . . . N6d7

It too is forestalled!

30 Rc2 Ne5

Exploiting an opportunity to simplify the position somewhat. With the exchange of all the knights Black's block-

ade on the dark squares will become as though absolute.

31	**Nxe5**	**Bxe5**
32	**Qf2**	**Nd7**
33	**b4**	**Qd8**

Delaying the invasion of the rook at c7 and preventing the invasion of the queen at b6, which, in view of the weakness of the d6 pawn, would have hindered the regrouping of the black pieces.

34	**Be2**	**Bg7**
35	**Nd3**	**Ne5**
36	**Nxe5**	**Bxe5**

For the third time, but by no means the last, the bishop appears at e5. Its blockading strength has grown to the maximum, even though White now penetrates onto the seventh rank.

37	**Rfc1**	**Kg7**
38	**Rc7**	**Qg5**
39	**R1c2**	

Now the threat of a counter-attack on the dark squares restricts the white queen, and does not allow it to go to the queenside. For example, 39 Qa7 Qg3, and White cannot take either the rook or the b7 pawn because of 40 . . . Bd4+ 41 Kh1 Be5 42 Kg1 Bd4+. Nevertheless, Kasparov himself called 39 R1c2 a 'sound time-trouble' move, and an alternative suggestion of his is given at the end of the game.

39	**. . .**	**h4**
40	**Bg4**	**Kh6**

In this position the game was adjourned. On the resumption there followed:

41	**Kh1**	**b6**
42	**Ra7**	**Bg3**
43	**Qd2**	**Bf4**
44	**Qd4**	**Be5**
45	**Qg1**	**a5**

The time has come to switch to more active defence. If White accepts the pawn sacrifice *(46 bxa5 bxa5 47 Rxa5)*, he opens a way for the black rook into his position. Therefore:

46	**Qc1**	**Bf4**
47	**Qa1**	**Be5**
48	**Qg1**	**axb4**
49	**axb4**	**Bf4**
50	**Qa1**	**Be5**
51	**Qa3**	**Kg7**

Black again sticks to waiting tactics.

52	**Rf2**	**Bf6**

Breaking the combined 'glances' of the white pieces at f7 (in reserve White still has *Be6* in combination with *Rc7* and *Qa7*).

53	**Qd3**	**Qe5**
54	**Be5**	**Kg8**
55	**Qf3**	**Kg7**
56	**Qf4**	**Qd4**
57	**Rf1**	**b5**
58	**Bg4**	**Rd8**

Of course, not 58 . . . Qxa7 59 Qxf6+, breaking through the defensive barriers with an easy win.

59 Rc7 Qb2
60 Rc2 Qd4
61 Rd2 Qe5
62 Qxe5

In principle, a major achievement for White. He has forced the exchange of queens and rid himself of the spectre of a counterattack, but . . . The blockaded nature of the position is retained, and will the exchange advantage suffice for a win?

62 . . . Bxe5
63 Rc2 Bd7!
64 Be2

At this point White evidently decided that after the exchange of bishops Black would tie up his opponent's forces by a counterattack on the b4 pawn.

64 . . . f5 65 Rc7 Kh6 66 Bd3 fxe4 67 Bxe4 Kg5 68 Bd3 Bd4 69 Rb7 Bc3 70 Bxb5

Winning also a pawn, but as compensation both black bishops become threatening.

70 . . . Bf5 71 Be2 Ra8 72 b5 Ra2 73 Bf3 Rb2 74 Rb8 Bd4 75 Rd1 Bc5 76 Kh2 Be3 77 Re1 Bf2 78 Rf1 Bc5 79 Re8 Bd4 80 Rd1 Bf2 81 Be2 Bd7 82 Re4 Bf5 83 Re8 Bd7 Draw agreed.

Although later analysis showed that White did not exploit all his chances (thus stronger was *39 h4! Qh6* — if 39 . . . Qd2 40 R1c2 — *40 g3,* while in Kasparov's opinion *64 Bxd7* would also have given a win — *64 . . . Rxd7 65 Rc8 Rb7 66 Rfc1 Kf6 67 R1c7 Rb6 68 Ra8* or *65 . . . Ra7 66 Rb8 Ra2 67 Rb1 Kf6 68 Rxb5,* and the b-pawn cannot be stopped) Black was nevertheless awarded a special prize for his defensive skill: such was the diversity of defensive ideas that he displayed in this game.

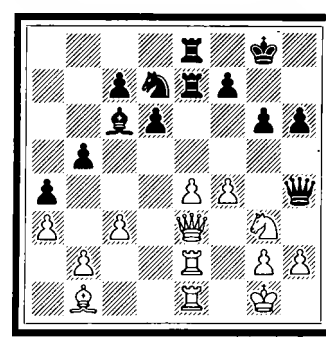
And in concluding this 'speech for the defence' in favour of defence, we would remind the reader that the defending side also has another serious weapon — counterattack. But about that in the second part of the book.

1
Prevention is better than cure

This well known medical saying is fully applicable to chess. And although prophylactic measures against an embryo attack by the opponent may at times seem tedious and unnecessary, their benefit cannot be overestimated. Grand master Aron Nimzowitsch, who first introduced into chess theory the concept of prophylaxis, considered such actions to be not only a guarantee of success, but also an essential component of any 'competently' organized chess battle.

Nimzowitsch deemed the main tasks of prophylaxis to be, firstly, the restriction of the opponent's possibilities, and secondly the overprotection of strategically important points.

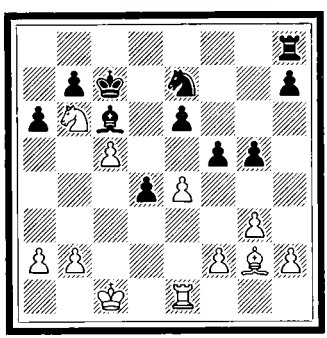
Here we will deal with the first of these tasks, one which remains topical to this day. To place an impenetrable dam in the path of the opponent's ideas is certainly not possible: in the majority of positions there are several plans, several methods of play. But to correctly single out the objectively strongest and most dangerous, to restrict the opponent in carrying out this plan — this is a touchstone on which true mastery is tested. Achieving the ideal here is evidently not possible for anyone, just as no one can in general play chess faultlessly. But not to learn this means to come to a halt in one's chess development.



In the game **Lanka-Kharitonov,** Leningrad 1977, Black has no difficulties, but nevertheless he has to reckon with the opponent's mobile pawn pair in the centre. On the other hand, for White the possible march of the black knight to g4 is unpleasant. Therefore,

from the viewpoint of prophylaxis — in its first sense — he should have continued 28 Qf2 (removing the queen from its position opposite the black rooks), and if 28 . . . Nf6, then 29 h3.

In fact the hasty **28 e5? Nf6! 29 Qd3** (both 29 . . . Ng4 and 29 . . . Nd5 were threatened) **29 . . . dxe5 30 fxe5 Ng4 32 Nf1 Rxe5** quickly led to his defeat, since 33 Rxe5 Qf2+ leads to mate.

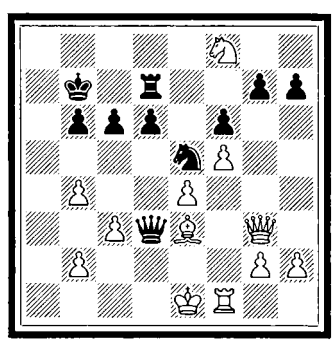


In the game **Gik-Dvoretsky,** Moscow, 1972, Black has merely a slight initiative, associated with . . . Rf8 and pressure on the f2 pawn. But if White, after correctly assessing the position, had prophylactically strengthened his queenside defences and simultaneously moved his pawns out of danger by 23 b4! Rf8 24 a3, then in variations such as 24 . . . fxe4 25 Bxe4 Rxf2 26 Bxc6 Nxc6 27 Rxe6 Rxh2 28 Rf6 he would have had good drawing chances.

But in the game there followed:

23 Bh1? Rf8 24 f4 gxf4 25 gxf4 Ng6 26 exf5 Rxf5, and the c5 pawn, which had been left without prophylactic defence, caused White's downfall: **27 b4 Nxf4,** with a straightforward win.

An excellent example of restricting the opponent's possibilities was given back in 1894 by **Emanuel Lasker,** in the 3rd game of his World Championship Match with **Steinitz** (Black).



White is a bishop and a pawn up, the black rook is attacked, and yet the game is not yet decided.

27 . . . Qc2
28 Bd2 Re7

The immediate 28 . . . Rd8

29 Ne6 Ra8 did not work — 30 Qxg7+.

29 Ne6

The action of the rook on the e-file must be blocked, otherwise White will be in trouble.

29 ... Qxe4+
30 Qe3 Qxg2

"Now comes a very important manoeuvre, the key to White's defence" — this and the following comments are by Lasker.

31 b3

"If instead 31 Qe2, then Black replies 31 . . . Qd5, when the entire queenside will be at his disposal".

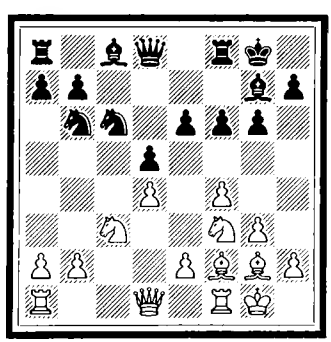
31 ... Re8
32 Qe2 Qh3

"The first sign that Black's attack is gradually petering out. The queen would have stood better somewhere on the queenside, but 32 . . . Qd5 cannot be played, however, for then 33 c4 forces the exchange of queens".

33 Kd1 Ra8
34 Rf2 Ra2

"Black's pieces are well placed, but they are no longer threatening anything".

We would agree with this. By restricting the black queen on move 31, White stabilized the position, and after **35 b5! c5** (otherwise the white knight will take up an ideal post at d4) **36 Nxg7 d5 37 Kc1** Black himself offered the exchange of queens: **37 . . . Qd3** ("on 37 . . . c4 there would have followed 38 bxc4, or 37 . . . Nd3+ 38 Kb1 with exchanges to follow" — Lasker) **38 Qxd3 Nxd3+ 39 Kb1 Rb2+ 40 Ka1 Rxb3 41 Rf3,** and White converted his advantage into a win, by a timely sacrifice of the exchange: **41 . . . c4 42 Ne8 Nb4** (alas, this is insufficient) **43 Rg3 Ra3+ 44 Kb1 Rb3+ 45 Kc1 Nd3+ 46 Rxd3! cxd3 47 Nxf6 Rxb5 48 Ne8,** and the white pawn promoted to a queen.

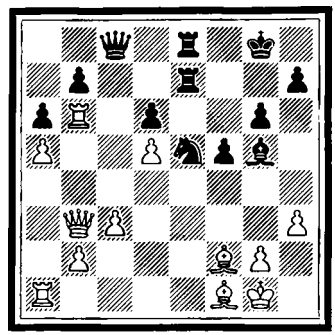


In the 13th game of the **Karpov - Kasparov** Return Match, London / Leningrad 1986, White has just prophylactically reinforced his d4

pawn by Bc1-e3-f2, and plans sooner or later to initiate active play in the centre by advancing e2-e4. In principle Black could have 'disregarded' this threat, since in the complications after 13 . . . Nc4 14 e4 (if *14 b3, then 14 . . . Nd6*, and the planned break is less favourable for White) 14 . . . Nxb2 15 Qe2 Nc4 16 exd5 exd5 17 Nxd5! N6a5 he has his trumps. But he preferred to narrow sharply the battle region, by prophylactically closing the centre.

13 . . . f5!?

In conceding the e5 square to his opponent, Black has also secured for himself an analogous outpost in the centre. But the main point is that now pawn tension is possible only after the double-edged g3-g4, which would expose the white king. The subsequent manoeuvring battle confirmed the correctness of this strategy, and the game ended in a draw. True, we cannot avoid mentioning that the decision taken by Black on his 13th move also made it extremely difficult for him to begin an open piece battle, but nevertheless an objective assessment of the position demanded precisely this prophylaxis.



In the game **Mortensen - Karpov**, European Team Championship, Plovdiv, 1983, White holds the initiative and threatens to intensify his queenside pressure by Ra4-b4.

In addition, how should the d6 pawn be defended? The active defence 26 . . . Nd7 27 Rxd6 *(27 Rxb7? Nc5)* 27 . . . Nc5 28 Qc4 Ne4 29 Qxc8 Rxc8 30 Re6 does not give Black anything for the pawn, and the passive regrouping 26 . . . Rd8 27 Ra4 Kg7 *(27 . . . Rdd7? 28 Bxa6)* 28 Rab4 Rdd7 deprives him of any counterplay. Therefore Black adopts more flexible tactics — something in between active and passive defence: he as far as possible restrains the opponent's initiative, if only for the time being.

26 . . . Nf7
27 Ra4 Qd7!?

The defence of the d6 pawn is temporarily entrusted to the queen, in order to free the knight. 27 . . . Rd7, with the same aim, does not work because of a familiar blow, but in a more elegant form — 28 Rc4! Qa8 29 Rcb4 Nd8 30 Bxa6! bxa6 31 Rb8, and the queen is caught.

28 Rab4 Nd8
29 Qa4

With the exchange of queens the advance of White's queenside pawns will become possible.

29 . . . Bd2!

A strange looking move, which nevertheless has a lot sense. After 29 . . . Qxa4 30 Rxa4 Rd7 31 b4 the threat of 32 b5 would have arisen. Now the b2-b4 advance is delayed, if only temporarily.

30 Qxd7 Rxd7
31 Rd4 Bg5!

Again indirectly hindering White's plan: 32 b4?! Nf7 33 b5 Bd8 34 bxa6 Bxb6 35 axb6 bxa6 36 Bxa6 Rb8 37 Rc4 Ne5 38 Rc7 Kf7, and White has no more than a draw in the variation 39 Bb5 Rxc7 40 bxc7 Rc8 41 Bb6 Ke7 42 Ba6 Kd7 43 Bb5+.

32 Rd1 Nf7
33 Rb3 Bf6

White's position is slightly more pleasant, but that is all. Now he should have continued 34 c4, although even after this the advance of the b-pawn is not at all easy to prepare. The exchange of the bishop which is preventing this deprives White of his control of the dark squares and hands the initiative to his opponent.

34 Bd4? Bxd4
35 Rxd4

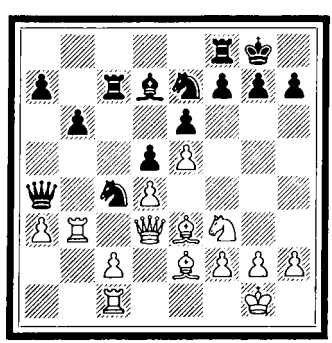
Paradoxically, in the interests of *defence* 35 cxd4!? followed by Rc3 came into consideration.

35 . . . Re1
36 Rdb4 Nd8

With the threat of 37 . . . Ra1.

37 Ra3 Rde7
38 c4 Rc1

And without particular difficulty, by including his knight in the attack, Black went on to win.



In the 11th game of the **Sokolov-Yusupov** Candidates Match, Riga, 1986, for the moment the main battle is taking place on the queenside. Here White's 'heavy artillery' is concentrated, and now Black increases his pressure on the half-open c-file.

18 ... Rfc8?!

But meanwhile he should not have forgotten about the thematic White attack on the kingside, which is always possible in the French Defence: thus the advance of one of the white pieces to g5 suggests itself. Therefore the most serious consideration should have been given to the prophylactic 18 ... Nxe3 19 fxe3 *(19 Qxe3? Nf5)* 19 ... h6, after which it is practically impossible to approach the black king: the g5 square is covered, and there is nothing that can be sacrificed on h6 ... White would only have been left with the activity associated with c2-c4, but then Black would have obtained — even if only temporarily — the d5 square and the a8-h1 diagonal for his bishop, which would have given him certain counterchances.

After the move played, White's offensive, which Black has failed to restrict in time, now commences.

19 Bg5 Ng6
20 h4 Na5?

And this is a serious mistake, again on the theme of prophylaxis. A direct 'bayonet' attack was threatened, and the advance of the white pawn needed to be halted by 20 ... h6, when after 21 h5 Black could have chosen between passive defence by 21 ... Nf8, and an active search for complications such as 21 ... Ngxe5 22 dxe5 hxg5 23 Nxg5 Nxe5 24 Qh7+ Kf8 25 Qh8+ Ke7 26 Qxg7 Rxc2.

21 Rb4 Qc6
22 h5 Nf8
23 Qe3

The hasty 23 h6 would have allowed Black by 23 ... Qc3 to avoid the direct threats: the exchange of queens favours him, and after 24 Qd1 White has nothing with which to attack. But on the agenda now are both 24 h6, and the continuation which occurs in the game.

23 ... Be8

Preparing a defensive line in the event of 24 h6 g6 25 Qf4 Nd7, but ...

24 Bf6!

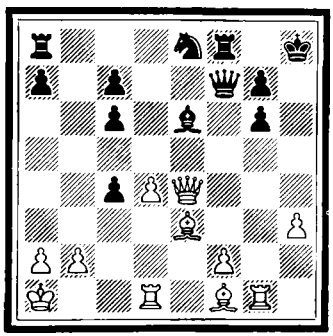
A pseudo sacrifice, since its acceptance leads to mate.

24 ... h6

There is no other defence against 25 Qg5.

25 Qf4 Qc3 26 Qg4 Ng6 27 hxg6 fxg6 28 Bh4

White has gained a material advantage, and he later returned the piece for an attack and won on move 41.



This position from the game **Gheorghiu-Ljubojevic,** Riga Interzonal, 1979, is not easy to assess. All Black's pawns are weak, but for the moment he is a pawn up. White also has plenty of pawn islands, and, what is especially significant, his two bishops are not very active.

Had Black made this particular factor the basis of his assessment, in the first instance he would have taken prophylactic measures against the activation of the bishops, and that means against the d4-d5 breakthrough. One way of achieving this would have been by 22 . . . Nd6. Then after 23 Qxc6 Bd5 24 Qa4 a5 the white queen is driven to the edge of the board, the white bishops have little mobility, the centre is blockaded, and Black has at least equal possibilities, while after 23 Qxg6 the exchange of queens reduces White's attacking chances to nought.

Black, however, chose a different way.

22 . . . Bf5?
23 Qxc6 Nd6
24 d5!

The situation has immediately changed: the dark-square bishop has gained scope.

24 . . . a5
25 Bxc4 a4
26 a3

Timely prophylaxis: the king must keep under cover.

26 . . . Nxc4
27 Qxc4 Rfb8
28 Bd4!

The opposite-colour bishops merely increase the active side's attacking potential. Against the advance of the h-pawn there is no satisfactory defence.

28 . . . Re8
29 h4 Re4
30 f3 Re7

Alas, on 30 . . . Rxh4 there

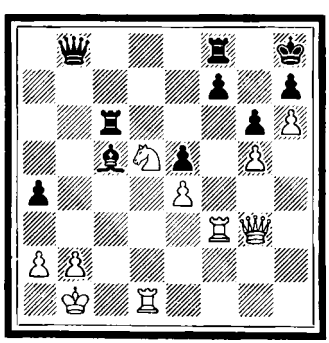
would have followed 31 Bxg7+.

31 h5 Kh7
32 Qc6

Threatening both the prosaic 33 Qxa8, and the little combination 33 hxg6+ Bxg6 34 Rxg6 Qxg6 35 Rh1+. Black therefore resigned.

★ ★ ★

In present-day chess the concept of overprotection has slightly changed — masters and grandmasters prefer to economise on their forces and at times to leave this or that weakness altogether undefended — for the sake of activity on another part of the board. But nevertheless, this principle of Nimzowitsch can in no way be considered completely obsolete.

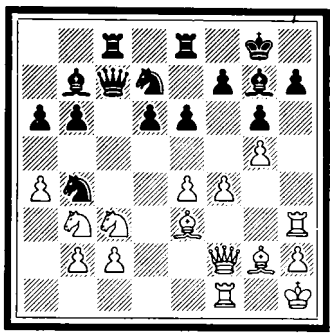


In the game **Glek - Itkis,** Borzhomi, 1984, White's advantage is mainly due to his pieces being strongly directed at the enemy king position. In particular 34 Rdf1 is threatened, and Black has to decide on the basic aim of his actions. Should this be a counter-attack against b2, passive defence of f7, or . . .

He chose **33 . . . Rfc8?!,** and quickly lost: **34 Rxf7 Bd4 35 Qa3! Bc5** (parrying the threat of 36 Rxh7+) **36 Qf3! Rf8 37 Rf1 Kg8 38 Rg7+ Kh8 39 Qf7! Rxf7 40 Rfxf7,** and Black resigned: if 40 . . . Qg8 41 Nf6.

Meanwhile, White's task would have been seriously complicated by overprotection of the e5 pawn, but not by the 'active' 33 . . . Bd4? *(34 Rxd4! exd4 35 Rxf7! Rfc8 36 Nc7! Qb5 37 Qf3 Qc4 38 Rf8+ Rxf8 39 Qxf8+ Qg8 40 Qe7!* and White wins), but by the defensive 33 . . . Re6. This would have freed Black's hands, and in the event of, for example, 34 Rdf1 Bd4 35 b4 axb3 36 Rxb3 Qa7 he would have gained definite counterplay.

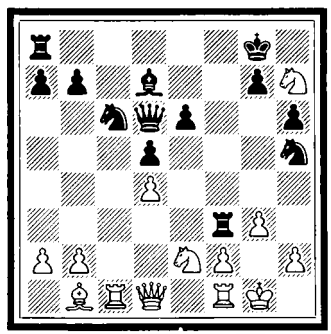
In the last game of the **Karpov - Kasparov** World Championship Match, Moscow, 1985, only a win would do for White and, while engaging in play over the entire board, he was nevertheless



primarily threatening an attack on the kingside. But it only required a single prophylactic move, one which, it is true, Kasparov called "the most difficult move in the game", to neutralize all White's ambitious aspirations.

23 . . . Re7!!

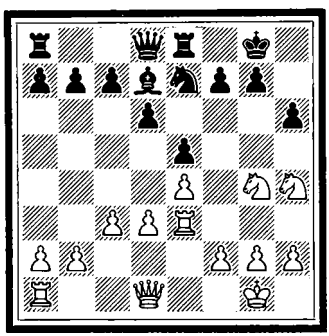
By 'encaging' itself in this original way, the rook securely covers f7, which was not threatened for the moment, but which was nevertheless insufficiently defended. In this way the bayonet attack f4-f5 is ruled out. At the same time the rook avoids being passively placed at f8, and in principle prepares a counter-offensive in the attacked sector (this theme is examined in the second part of the book). All that we should mention here is that after **24 Kg1 Rce8! 25 Rd1 f5** Black gained fully equal chances.



In the heat of the battle the white knight has gone too far, and in **Kr.Georgiev-Dolmatov,** Sofia, 1985, the correct continuation was the prophylactic 18 . . . Be8, defending the knight at h5, and if 19 Nc3 Rf5!, blocking White's only attacking diagonal. And since 20 g4 does not work because of 20 . . . Rf4 21 gxh5 Nxd4 with the decisive threat of . . . Nf3+ followed by . . . Bxh5 and . . . Rh4, in the end Black would have obtained two pieces for a rook.

But Black incorrectly opened up the position with **18 . . . e5?**, and after **19 Rxc6! bxc6 20 dxe5 Qxe5 21 Nd4 Rf7 22 Re1** he had to find the only saving reply **22 . . . Bg4 23 f3 Qd6,** which, however, would not have promised him any advantage after the correct 24 Qd3 Bd7 25 Ng5 Nf6 26 Nxf7 Kxf7 27 Qg6+ Kf8 28 Kg2.

An elegant system of defence, comprising a whole series of operations, was demonstrated in the last game of his life by **Paul Keres,** playing Black against **Browne** at Vancouver, 1975.



White's initiative is threatening to develop into a direct attack, and in the first instance Black overprotects his most vulnerable point — the advanced h6 pawn.

16 . . . Kh7
17 Rg3 Ng8
18 Nf3

An enforced retreat: after strengthening his h6 pawn, Black was ready to meet 18 Nf5 with 18 . . . g6, and if 19 Nfe3 h5, winning a piece.

18 . . . Bxg4!
19 Rxg4 Nf6
20 Rh4 Kg8

Prophylaxis against the possibility of Ng5+, transferring the knight to a different, more favourable position. Now Black has everything prepared for a counterblow in the centre, when White's king's rook will be misplaced.

21 Rh3 d5 22 Qe2 Qd7 23 Nh4 dxe4 24 dxe4 Rad8 25 Nf5 Qd2 26 Qf3 Re6

The threat of 27 Nxh6+ is parried, and White's position has been invaded. Black's prophylaxis and active defence have borne fruit: his position is already better.

27 Rg3 g6
28 Rf1 Qf4!

White cannot save his e-pawn, and his tactical threats are easily parried.

29 Rd1 Ree8

The most accurate: the d-file remains in Black's possession, although he could also have played 29 . . . Rxd1+ 30 Qxd1 Nxe4 31 Rf3 Qd2 32 Qxd2 Nxd2 33 Nxh6+ Kg7 34 Rd3 Nc4 35 b3 Kxh6 36 bxc4 Rc6, with an extra pawn in the rook ending.

30 Ne7+ Kg7
31 Nd5 Qxf3
32 Rxf3

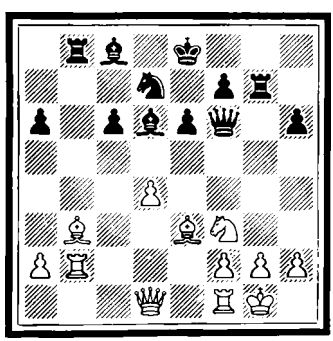
In the event of 32 gxf3 Nh5 and 33 . . . c6 White's rook would have been a helpless witness to the destruction of his queenside.

32 . . . c6 33 Ne3 Rxd1+ 34 Nxd1 Rd8 35 Ne3 Nxe4

Black has won a pawn, and he easily realised his advantage: **36 h3 Ng5 37 Rg3 f5 38 Nxf5+ gxf5 39 h4 Kg6 40 hxg5 hxg5,** and within a few moves White resigned.

What would you have played?

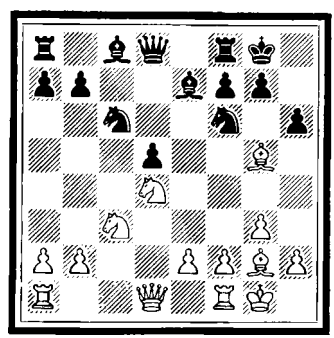
No. 1



Black has a weak pawn at c6, difficulties over the development of his light-square bishop, and, most important, an insecurely placed king. But as compensation for all this he is preparing an attack on the kingside (in particular along the g-file and the b8-h2 diagonal); in addition it can be strengthened by the transference of the queen's rook via b5 to f5 or h5.

What should White play?

No. 2

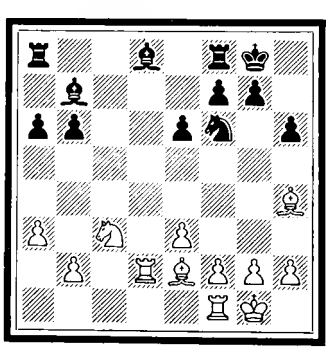


The white bishop is attacked, and on many occasions famous players have exchanged it without loss of time — 11 Bxf6 Bxf6, then given the opponent a weakness at c6 by 12 Nxc6 bxc6, followed by pressure on the c-file with 13 Qc2 and Rac1. True, in this case Black gains control of the a1-h8 diagonal and obtains counter-play.

What other plan does White have? On what variation is it based?

2
Disarmament — the road to peace

The strength of an attack lies in the dynamic potential of the pieces, and very often a defence can be based on a mass exchange of fighting units, transposing into one of the types of ending which are famous for their drawing tendencies — rook endings, those with opposite-colour bishops, and so on. Moreover, the defending side even plans a certain loss of material — again taking account of the fact that an extra pawn, say, does not always guarantee a win in the endgame. Here the 15th game of the **Capablanca-Alekhine** World Championship Match, Buenos Aires, 1927, serves as a model example.



The outward simplicity of the position is deceptive: there is no doubt about White's advantage. He is ready to seize the open d-file, which in combination with the weakness of the queenside pawns may cause Black a mass of trouble. For example, 17 . . . Be7 18 Rfd1 Rfd8 19 Na4 b5 20 Rxd8+ Rxd8 21 Rxd8+ Bxd8 22 Nc5 Bc8 23 Bf3 Be7 24 b4, and Black is cramped.

It is with this in mind that Alekhine draws up a clear-cut plan of simplification.

17 . . . Ne4! 18 Nxe4 Bxh4 19 Nd6 Bd5 20 e4 Rfd8!

By this pawn sacrifice an ending with opposite-colour bishops is forced.

21 Nxf7

Otherwise a pawn cannot be won.

21 . . . Kxf7 22 exd5 Rxd5 23 Rxd5 exd5 24 Rd1 Bf6!

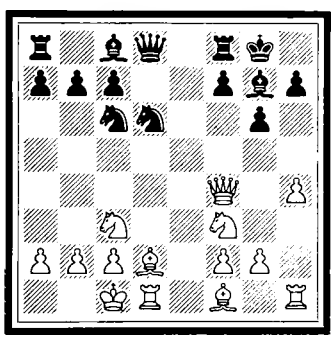
This is stronger than the 'greedy' 24 . . . Ke6 25 Bg4+ Ke5 26 g3 Bf6 27 f4+, when peace for the black king is only a dream.

25 Bf3 Rc8

26 Bxd5+ Ke7
27 b3 Bb2

Now, in defending his pawn, White is forced to allow the exchange of rooks.

28 a4 Rc1 29 Rxc1 Bxc1 30 Bc4 Draw agreed.



The diagram position was tested on several ocasions at the time when the game was played. The verdict of theory was that both after 11 . . . Be6 12 h5, and after 11 . . . h6 12 Bd3, White's initiative becomes threatening. Therefore in the game **Sanakoyev - Damsky,** Rostov-on-Don, 1961, Black decided to base his defence on mass, and as far as possible, rapid, exchanges.

11 . . . Qf6
12 Qxf6 Bxf6
13 Nd5 Bd8

The bishop has been driven from the long dark-square diagonal to a much more modest position, but on the other hand Black no longer has to fear a direct attack . . .

14 Bh6

Driving the black rook into a fork.

14 . . . Re8
15 Bg5

Otherwise Black transfers his knight via e4 to f6 with gain of tempo, ridding himself of the most annoying enemy piece — the knight at d5.

15 . . . Ne4!

Continuing the same 'exchanging policy'.

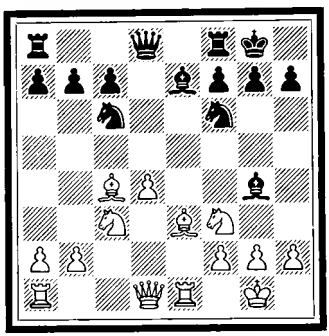
16 Bxd8 Rxd8
17 Bb5

White threatens to capture on c6 followed by giving check with his knight, but as compensation Black is the first to begin . . .

17 . . . Nxf2 18 Bxc6 Nxd1 19 Rxd1 bxc6 20 Nf6+ Kg7 21 Nh5+ Kh6 22 Rxd8 Kxh5 23 Rf8 f5 24 Rf7 h6 25 Rxc7 Be6 26 Rxc6 Bd5 27 Rd6 Bxf3 28 gxf3 Rg8

White's initiative has sufficed merely to force a rook ending with an extra pawn, which is of little significance in view of the activity of the black king. The game ended in a draw after **29 Rd4 Rf8! 30 Kd2 f4 31 Rd6 Rg8 32 Rf6 Kxh4 33 Rxf4+ Kg3** etc.

The defensive strength of exchanges is demonstrated even more strikingly (incidentally, in the same opening — Petroff's Defence) by the 30th game of the 1984/5 **Kasparov - Karpov** World Championship Match.



In **Tal - Suetin,** Sochi, 1977, Black equalized in this position by 12 . . . Na5 13 Bd3 Re8 14 h3 Bh5 14 a3 a6 etc. It turns out that there is also a sounder continuation, one which in addition is forcing.

12 . . . Bxf3
13 Qxf3

The avalanche of exchanges which has been set in motion can be interrupted only by 13 gxf3, but then the only 'decent' white pawns left are those at a2 and b2 . . .

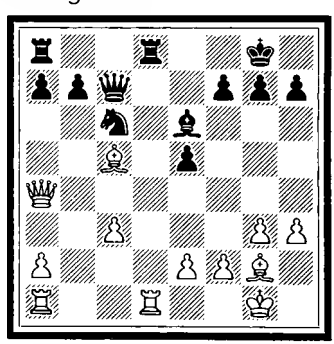
13 . . . Nxd4
14 Bxd4

After 14 Qxb7? Nc2 15 Rad1 Bd6 Black seizes the initiative and is ready to assail the white king.

14 . . . Qxd4
15 Rxe7 Qxc4
16 Qxb7 c6

Thus on every move pieces have disappeared from the board and there are very few left. White's invasion of the 7th rank can hardly be considered an achievement, since the black queen is active and 17 . . . Rab8 is threatened, with a counter-invasion.

17 Qb3 Qxb3 18 axb3 Rab8 19 Ra3 Rfe8 20 Rxe8+ Rxe8
Draw agreed.



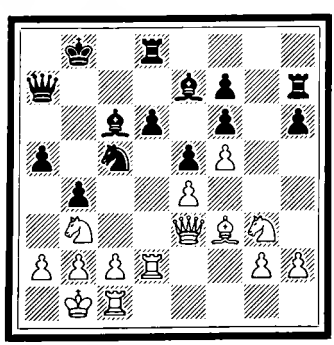
White's two active bishops and the possibility of creating pressure on the half-open b-file give him the better chances in the 26th game of the 1984/5 **Kasparov-Karpov** World Championship Match. Thus, for example, the transfer of the knight to a more active position — 17 . . . Na5 encounters the refutation 18 Qb4 Nc4 19 Bxb7!, when after

19 . . . Rxd1+ 20 Rxd1 Rb8 21 Bxa7 the weakness of the back rank tells. White also has the advantage after the interposition of 17 . . . h6, with the possible sequel 18 Rab1 Na5 19 Rxd8+ Qxd8 *(19 . . . Rxd8 20 Bxa7)* 20 Bb4 Nc6 21 Qb5 Nxb4 22 Rxb4.

Therefore the exchanging operation which occurs in the game, where Black sacrifices a pawn to go into an ending with opposite-colour bishops, must be considered the most sensible.

17 . . . Rxd1+ 18 Rxd1 Rd8 19 Rxd8+ Qxd8 20 Bxa7 Qa8! 21 Bxc6 bxc6 22 Kh2 h5 23 Qa5 f6

After the obvious 24 a4 Qc8 25 h4 Bc4 the a6 square is securely controlled and therefore a draw was agreed.



In the 6th game of the **Liu Shilan - Ioseliani** Women's Candidates Match, Velden, 1983, Black is doomed to passive defence, if, of course, she does not resort to a pawn sacrifice for the sake of greatly simplifying the position.

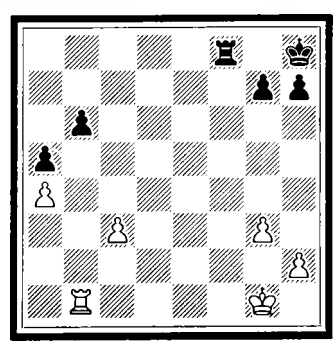
23 . . . h5!?
24 Nxc5

Without mass exchanges the pawn cannot be won: 24 Nxh5? Nxe4.

24 . . . Qxc5 25 Qxc5 dxc5 26 Rxd8+ Bxd8 27 h4 c4! 28 Rh1 Rh6 29 Bxh5 Bb6!

It would have been a bad mistake to play 29 . . . Bxe4 30 Nxe4 Rxh5 31 g4 with good winning chances. By activating the bishops to the maximum, Black gains counterplay in the endgame.

30 Rf1 (or 30 Bf3 Bf2 31 Nh5 Bxe4) **30 . . . Be3** (with the threat of 31 . . . Bf4) **31 Bxf7 Rxh4 32 Bxc4 Bxe4 33 Nxe4 Rxe4 34 Re1 Rh4 35 a3 Bc5 36 Bd5 bxa3 37 bxa3** Draw agreed.



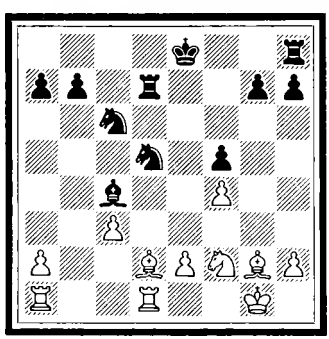
In the game **Gavrikov - Yakovich,** 53rd USSR Championship, Kiev, 1986, Black defended his attacked pawn with a natural move.

54 . . . Rf6?
55 Rf1! Kg8

The threat of a back rank mate forces Black to go into a lost pawn ending.

56 Rxf6 gxf6 57 Kf2 Kf7 58 Ke3 Ke6 59 Kd4 Kf5 60 Kd5

In the diagram position, meanwhile, by a pawn sacrifice — 54 . . . Rb8! 55 c4 Rc8 56 Rxb6 h6 57 Rb5 Rxc4 58 Rxa5 Rc1+ 59 Kg2 Rc2+ Black could have gained excellent drawing chances.



In the 6th game of the **Smyslov-Hübner** Candidates Match, Velden, 1983, White has lost the opening battle: his two bishops do not compensate for the numerous weaknesses in his pawn formation, and if Black should succeed in playing . . . Re7 and . . . Nf6 with control over e4, White will be in trouble.

He defends by simplifying, not stopping short of 'expiatory sacrifices'.

20 e4! fxe4
21 Nxe4 O—O
22 f5! b6

The pawn is taboo: 22 . . . Rxf5? 23 Bh3.

23 Bg5 Ne5
24 f6!

Simplification at a strictly measured cost.

24 . . . Nxf6 25 Nxf6+ gxf6 26 Rxd7 Nxd7 27 Bh6 Re8 28 a4

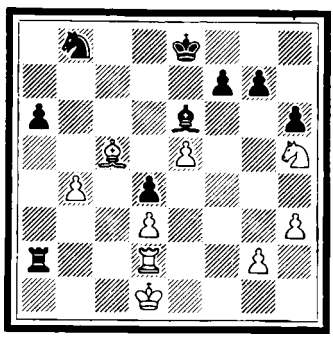
Little material is left on the board, and now the white bishops compensate to a certain extent for the missing pawn.

28 . . . Kf7 29 a5 b5 30 Rd1 Nc5 31 Bf4 a6 32 Bf3 Kg6 33 Rd6 Kf5 34 Bg3 Re3

This merely hastens the inevitible (in view of the threat of *Bf2*) draw.

35 Bf2 Rxf3
36 Bxc5 Rxc3
37 Rxf6+

The simplest. The ending with opposite-colour bishops after **37 . . . Kxf6 38 Bd4+ Kf5 39 Bxc3 Ke4 40 Kf2 Kd3 41 Bb4** need not have been adjourned, or resumed . . .



After getting into a difficult position in the 10th game of the 1983 Women's Candidates Match against **Semenova,** by a sacrifice of two pawns **Ioseliani** takes play into an ending with opposite-colour bishops.

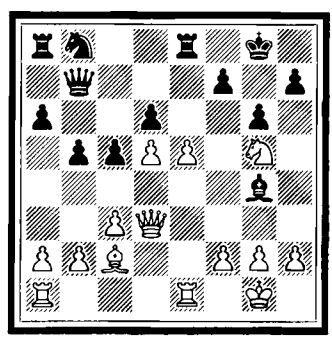
41 . . . Nc6!
42 Nxg7+ Kd7
43 Rxa2

The only way of retaining and increasing the material advantage.

43 . . . Bxa2 44 Kc2 Bd5 45 g3 Bg2 46 h4 Bf3 47 Nf5 h5 48 Nxd4 Nxd4+ 49 Bxd4 Ke6

Even for this move there was already no need. By placing her king at c6 and playing her bishop between e2-f3-g4-e6, Black could easily have parried all White's ambitions, even if the white king had penetrated onto the 8th rank. But Black made several mistakes, thus ruining her own excellent plan, and resigned on move 88.

A system of simplification can be especially effective if, in the process of attacking, the active side has made sacrifices. In such cases the correct defensive principle can be considered the return of the material 'on condition' that the attack is parried and . . . that future advantages are possible.



20 . . . Bf5

In the game **Nezhmetdinov-Damsky,** Kazan, 1955, after the 'normal' 21 Qd2 Bxc2 22 Qxc2 Qxd5 23 exd6 *(23 Rad1 Rxe5!)* 23 . . . Rxe1+ 24 Rxe1 Nd7 (but not *24 . . . Qxg5? 25 Re8+ Kg7 26 d7)* Black intends to restore the material balance *(25 Ne4 f5),* with a possibly somewhat inferior, but perfectly defensible position.

Instead of this, White sacri-

fices a piece to begin a lengthy positional (if one can call it thus) attack.

21 Qf3!? Bxc2
22 exd6 Qd7

Black's defensive plan is as follows: not to concede the open e-file, to drive away the aggressive white knight, and at the cost of his extra material to eliminate the pair of white d-pawns.

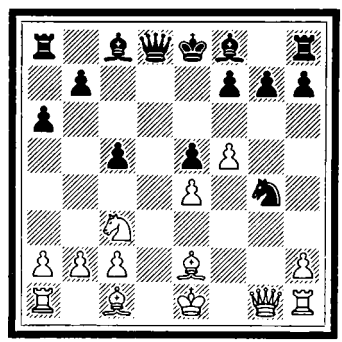
23 Qf6 Ra7

Preventing the invasion at e7. The knight at b8 is now undefended, but Black would not be sorry to give it up.

23 h4 h6 25 Nf3 Be4 26 Nh2 Bxd5 27 h5 Re6!

Black consistently carries out his plan. Other moves (for example, 27 . . . gxh5), would merely lead to unnecessary complications. The subsequent part of the game was practically forced: **28 Rxe6 Qxe6 29 Qd8+ Kg7 30 Qxb8 Rb7 31 Qd8 Rd7 32 Qh4 g5 33 Qg3 Qxd6 34 Qxd6 Rxd6 35 Rd1 Rd7 36 Ng4 Be6 37 Rxd7 Bxd7,** and with material level Black obtained a won ending with bishop against knight, and pawns on opposite wings.

After sacrificing a pawn, in the game **Kirpichnikov - Tukmakov,** Moscow, 1974, White intends to exploit his lead in development and make it extremely difficult for the black king to be evacuated from the centre. In addition the two black bishops have little mobility.

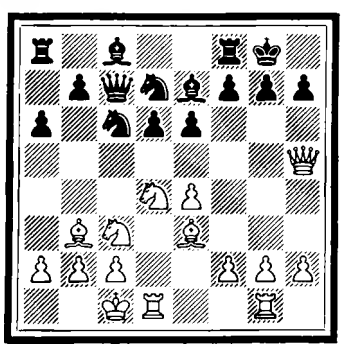


The best defence in this situation was to return the pawn — 14 . . . h5! 15 Bxg4 *(or 15 h3 Nf6 16 Bg5 c4!)* 15 . . . hxg4 16 Qxg4 c4 with counterplay.

Black, however, was tempted by the exchange of queens — **14 . . . Qh4+ 15 Qg3** (15 Kf1 Qh3+) **15 . . . Qxg3+ 16 hxg3,** but after **16 . . . Nf6 17 g4 Be7 18 g5 Nd7 19 Nd5 Bd8 20 Be3 b6 21 O—O—O** he came under strong pressure, and despite tenacious defence he was unable to save the game: **21 . . . Bb7 22 g6 fxg6 23 fxg6 h6 24 Bg4 Nf6 25 Be6 Nxd5 26 exd5 Bf6 27 c4 Ke7 28 b4! Kd6 29 Kd2 Bc8 30 bxc5+**

bxc5 31 Rb1 Bd8 32 Bxc8 Rxc8 33 Kd3 Ba5 34 Rb7 Rc7 35 Rxc7 Bxc7 36 Rf1 Bd8 37 Rf7 Bf6 38 Ra7 h5 39 Rxa6+ Kd7 40 Bxc5, and after the adjournment White won easily.

But more often the defending side does not aim for universal exchanges — they are not often possible — but merely to get rid of the opponent's most dangerous piece. Instructive in this respect are the comments by **Bent Larsen** on his game with **Ivanovic** (White), Niksic, 1983.



Black could have driven the white queen from its advanced post by 12 . . . Nf6 or 12 . . . Qa5, but the Danish grandmaster chose a different path.

"I was interested in trying 12 . . . Nxd4. Usually such an exchange is incorrect, since the white bishop at d4 is very strong. But in the given instance Black has an excellent defence prepared in . . . Bf6 or . . . Nf6. If White's knight is exchanged, he will no longer be able to sacrifice it at f5 or e6 . . ."

Larsen correctly appreciated the main features of the position, and by this timely exchange he sharply reduced White's attacking potential.

12 . . . Nxd4
13 Bxd4 b5
14 g4

Too slow. However, on 14 Rd3 Black is not obliged to allow mate by 14 . . . g6?? 15 Qxh7+!, but can simply play 14 . . . Nf6.

14 . . . Nf6!
15 Qh4

The exchange on f6 is obviously not good, while after 15 Qh3 b4 16 g5 Ne8! White simply loses a piece: 17 Na4 e5 18 Bb6 Bxh3.

15 . . . Nxe4
16 g5 Nxc3
17 Bxc3

Alas, the highly elegant 17 Bf6 Nxd1 18 Qh6!! is refuted by the simple 17 . . . Ne2+ and if 18 Kb1 Nxg1 19 Rxg1 Rd8.

17 . . . e5!

In opening the diagonal for one white bishop, Black restricts the other, whose pressure could have become unpleasant — see the previous

note. In addition a black bishop will now appear at f5 — both for defence, and for attack.

18 f4 Bf5
19 Rdf1 Qc5!

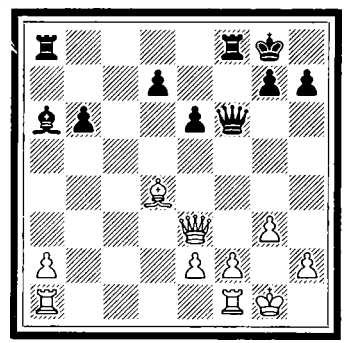
Control is taken of the squares d4 *(19 . . . exf4?? 20 Qxf4 Bg6 21 Qd4)* and b4, and the attack on the g1 rook indirectly defends the bishop at f5.

20 fxe5 dxe5
21 Qe1 e4

Nothing has come of White's attack, and the ending after 22 Bb4 promises him a gruelling defence, despite the opposite-colour bishops. But after the move in the game Black launches a successful counteroffensive:

22 h4 a5! 23 Bxa5 e3! 24 Bb4 (24 a3 e2! 25 Rf2 Rxa5 26 Rxf5 Qxf5 27 Qxa5 Bc5 28 Re1 b4! 29 axb4 Be3+ 30 Kb1 Qf1) **24 . . . Rxa2! 25 Kb1 Bxc2+ 26 Bxc2** (26 Kxa2 Bxb3+) **26 . . . Qa7 27 Bxh7+** (27 Ba3 Bxa3 28 Kxa2 Bb4+) **27 . . . Kxh7 28 Qc3 Bxb4 29 g6+ fxg6 30 Qc6 Rxf1+** White resigns.

In the 13th game of the 1985 **Kasparov - Karpov** World Championship Match, the opposite-colour bishops suggest that a draw is likely. But nevertheless the pawn at b6 seems doomed, and the white bishop is stronger than Black's . . . Does this mean that all is not clear?



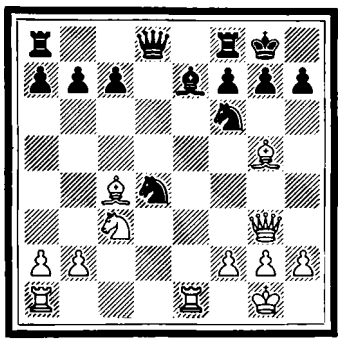
19 . . . Qh6!

Realizing that, after the exchange of queens, White's attacking chances will disappear and it will be more difficult for him to exploit his superior pawn formation, Black voluntarily agrees to a further disruption of his pawns. In spite of this, the draw now becomes obvious.

20 Qxh6 gxh6 21 Rfe1 Bc4 22 a3 b5 23 Rad1 Rf5 24 Bb2 Rd5 Draw agreed.

For the pawn White has developed a certain activity in the game **Lobron - Karpov,** Hanover, 1983. In the next diagram, 15 Rxe7 Qxe7 16 Nd5 is threatened, and the

prophylactic 14 . . . c6 leaves Black pinned after 15 Rad1.



14 . . . Bd6!

An unexpected defensive manoeuvre, which in combination with the following move enables White's initiative to be neutralized.

15 Qh4 h6!

After the exchange of queens the disruption of the king's pawn screen is of no particular significance, whereas the extra pawn will tell . . .

16 Bxf6 Qxf6 17 Qxf6 gxf6 18 Re4 c5 19 Rh4

Attempting somehow at least to continue playing actively. The unequivocal attempt to save the game by opposite-colour bishops — 19 Nb5 Nxb5 20 Bxb5 a6 21 Bf1 b5 by no means guarantees a draw with the rooks still on the board.

19 . . . Kg7

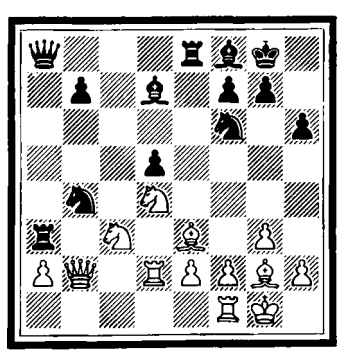
20 Ne4 Be7
21 Ng3 f5!

The simplest way of parrying the threatened 22 Rxd4 and 23 Nf5+. On a light square the pawn seems bound to be lost, but Black is prepared for this: he is pinning his hopes on his pawn majority on the opposite wing.

22 Rh3 Bd6 23 f4 b5! 24 Bd3 c4 25 Bxf5 Rfe8 26 Be4 Rad8 27 Rf1 b4 28 Kh1 c3 29 bxc3 bxc3 30 Nf5+ Nxf5 31 Bxf5 Bb4 32 a3 Ba5

It is clear that the c3 pawn will cost White a piece. The rest was not difficult: **33 g4 Re2 34 g5 h5** (it is technically more precise to give up a pawn than to open the f-file for White) **35 Rxh5 c2 36 Bxc2 Rxc2 37 f5 Bc7 38 g6 f6 39 Rh7+ Kg8 40 Re1 a5.**

Here the time control was reached, and White resigned.



This position from the 2nd game of the **Belyavsky - Kasparov** Candidates Match, Moscow, 1983, can be assessed using the term 'dynamic equilibrium'. Both sides have weaknesses — at a2 and d5, and the pieces are harmoniously placed . . . And yet had White accurately considered the strength of the knight at b4, he would have simplified the game somewhat by 20 Nc2! Nxc2 21 Rxc2 Bc6 22 Rd1, retaining quite good chances. In missing this possibility, he allows the black pieces to become dangerously active, and, forced into passive defence, he is unable to solve the resulting problems.

20 Nb3?! Bc6 21 Bd4 Ne4 22 Nxe4 dxe4 23 Ra1 Bd5!

The pressure on the a2 pawn increases.

24 Qb1 b6!

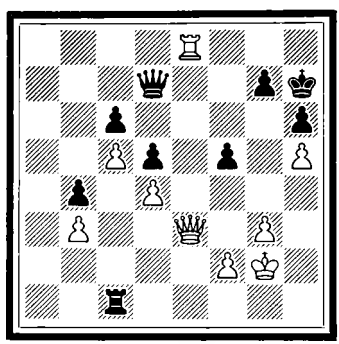
With the threat of 25 . . . e3. In addition, the pawn is poisoned: 25 Bxb6? Bxb3.

25 e3 Nd3
26 Rd1

Here the attempt to simplify would not have met with 'mutual understanding' — 26 Nc1 Ne1!, with the threat of exchanging on g2 or giving check at f3.

26 . . . b5 27 Bf1 b4 28 Bxd3 exd3 29 Qxd3 Rxa2 30 Rxa2 Qxa2 31 Nc5 Bf3 32 Ra1 Qd5

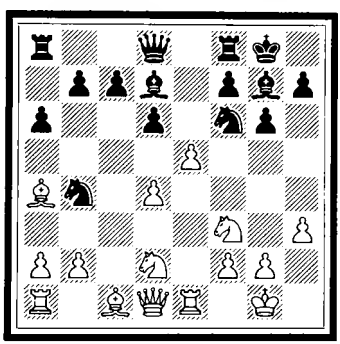
Black has two bishops and a dangerous passed pawn, whereas White had . . . time trouble. Within 5 moves he lost on time in a poor position.



In the 4th game of the **Polugayevsky - A. Zaitsev** USSR Championship play-off match, Vladimir, 1969, White is threatening a decisive attack on the king with his heavy pieces, and a defence should have been sought in the exchange of queens, transposing, if necessary with sacrifices, into a rook ending. 51 . . . Qf7! 52 Re7 Qf6! would have served this aim, when White would have had to find the only move 53 Rb7!, with the idea of invading the 8th rank with queen and rook, since after 53 Re6 Qg5 54

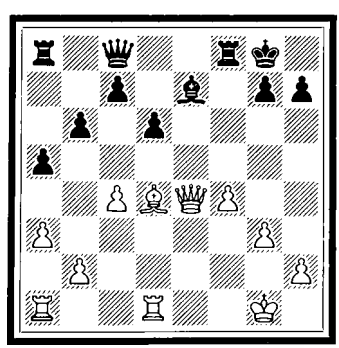
Qxg5 hxg5 55 Rxc6 Rd1, it is not easy for him to win.

But after **51 ... Rc3? 52 Qe5!** White created the deadly threats of 53 Qb8 and 53 Re7. There followed **52 ... f4** (52 ... Qf7 no longer works because of 53 Qb8 Qxh5 54 Rh8+ Kg6 55 Qe8+ Kg5 56 f4+ Kg4 57 Qe2+) **53 Qb8 f3+ 54 Kh2,** and Black resigned.



In the game **Romanishin - Klovan,** Yurmala, 1983, there is no question of wholesale exchanges: the battle is only just beginning. It is obvious that the attacked knight must go to d5 (at h5 it might be lost, while e8 would be too passive), and, so that it should feel comfortable, it was essential to exchange one of the opponent's central attackers — the light-square 'Spanish' bishop (12 ... Bxa4! 13 Qxa4 Nfd5 14 Qb3 — defending d3 — 14 ... dxe5). But Black missed this possibility — **12 ... Nfd5?! 13 Bb3 Nf4** (there is nothing else) **14 Ne4 Nbd3 15 Bxf4 Nxf4 16 Qd2** (16 exd6 Bf5 would have given Black counterplay for the pawn) **16 ... dxe5 17 dxe5 Ne6 18 Rad1 Bc6 19 Nf6+ Bxf6 20 Qc3,** and in this inferior position, instead of **20 ... Qe7 21 exf6 Qc5 22 Ne5!** with advantage to White, he should have sought salvation in the queen sacrifice 20 ... Bg7 21 Rxd8 Raxd8.

But in aiming for simplification the defending side should not part with a piece which bears the main burden of defence.



The apparent simplicity of the position does not save Black from serious difficulties in the game **Lundin-Yanofsky,** Groningen, 1946. He cannot wrest control of the e-file,

and there appear to be no grounds for active defence. Nevertheless, it is only his next simplifying move (and before this Black had been sticking to such tactics) which makes his position hopeless.

19 . . . Bf6?

Even with his control of the e-file, White cannot achieve success without invading the opponent's position, the most desirable square for this being e7. And it is this that Black leaves undefended! By exchanging heavy pieces, but retaining the bishops (for example, 19 . . . Qd7 20 Re1 Rae8 21 Qd5+ Kh8 22 Re6 Bd8 23 Rae1 Rxe6), Black would still have stood worse, but nothing real for White would have been apparent.

Now, however, an invasion is unavoidable.

20 Bxf6 Rxf6 21 Re1 Rf7 22 Qd5 Qf8 23 Re6 Re8 24 Rae1 Rxe6 25 Rxe6 Qd8 26 Qe4 Qd7 27 Re8+ Rf8 28 Re7 Qf5

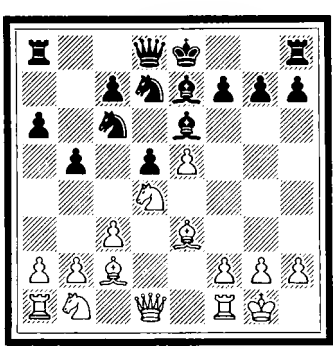
There is nothing else: 28 . . . Qa4 29 Qd4 Rf7 30 Qd5.

29 Qxf5 Rxf5
30 Rxc7

White has won a pawn with the superior position, and he gradually realized his advantage.

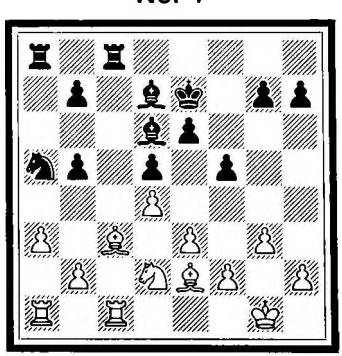
What would you have played?

No. 3



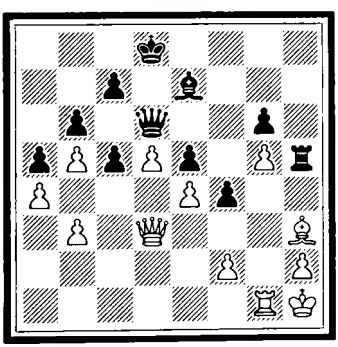
By 12 Nf3-d4 White has just offered a pawn sacrifice, preparing in reply to the natural 12 . . . Ncxe5 13 f4 Nc4 the devilish 14 f5! Nxe3 15 fxe6 Nxd1 16 exf7+ Kf8 17 Ne6 mate! The capture on e5 with the other knight does not appear to work.

No. 4



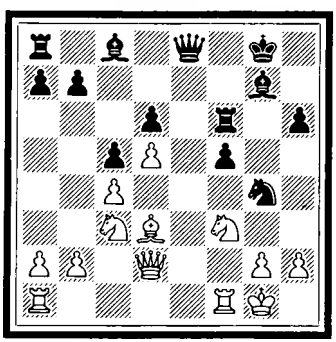
Black completely holds the initiative on the queenside, and even the active **18 f3 Nc4 19 Bxc4 bxc4 20 e4 Kf7** led White first to an inferior position, and after **21 e5?** (21 exd5 exd5 22 f4 followed by the transfer of the knight to e5 was essential) **21 . . . Be7 22 f4 b5** to a strategically lost one: passive defence does not help, and White does not have even a glimmer of counterplay. Could he have avoided all this?

No. 5



In the press centre of this event the overwhelming majority of the experts considered Black's position to be hopeless. Indeed, he cannot regain the pawn — 39 . . . Rxg5? 40 Bg4 followed by h2-h4, or 39 . . . Bxg5 40 Qf3 and against Qg4 with a decisive invasion there appears to be no defence . . .

No. 6



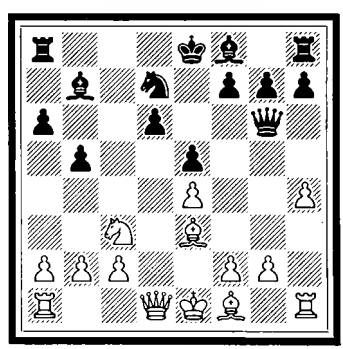
Black's position is about to become very dangerous: in particular 20 Rae1 and 21 h3 is threatened, and in some cases Nh4 . . .

3
Trench warfare

In principle, no one likes defending passively. What pleasure is there in parrying enemy attacks, holding a shield in each hand, and not even contemplating answering blow with blow? Nevertheless, the necessity for such defence is sometimes dictated to us by time itself. Remember the First World War, when machine-guns had been invented and were being used, when at first there were no tanks, but then they began to appear in small numbers, and when a new form of warfare was created — trench warfare. And when it became dangerous for even the most dashing cavalry to advance under the intense machine-gun fire of those who were deeply and securely entrenched in the earth, and in addition fenced in by barbed wire.

Why all these analogies? For the reason that it is not by accident that chess is called an ideal model of life. And however much we might want quickly to display our temperament on the board, to go out into open battle, sometimes — and not so rarely! — it pays to soberly assess the situation and 'dig in' deeper, and be concerned about a second and third line of defence.

In such situations impatience can prove costly.



In spite of its apparent well-being, Black's position in the game **Planinc - Gerenski,** Varna, 1970, is difficult. Weak squares in the centre and on the queenside, vulnerable queen position — all this demands accurate defence, and in the first instance the correct choice of its character. We should mention in passing

that the captuer of 12 . . . Bxe4 is risky in view of 13 h5 Qf5 14 g4! Qf3 15 Nxe4 Qxe4 *(15 . . . Qxh1 16 Qd5!)* 16 Rg1 with the threat of Bg2.

Having realized the danger of such an active course, Black nevertheless placed his choice on another active variation.

12 . . . f5?

Instead of this he should have defended using 'therapeutic methods' — 12 . . . Rc8 13 h5 Qe6 14 Nd5 Nf6.

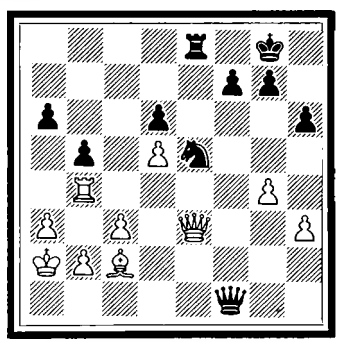
13 Be2 Nf6 14 Bg5! fxe4 15 O—O Qf7 16 Bxf6 Qxf6 17 a4! Qe6 18 axb5 axb5 19 Bg4 Qf7 20 f4!

Black's active defence has led to him being hopelessly behind in development, and hence to a crushing defeat.

20 . . . d5 21 fxe5 Bc5+ 22 Kh1 Qe7 23 Nxd5 Qxe5 24 Rf5 Qg3 25 Nc7+! Qxc7 26 Rxc5 Qe7 27 Re5! Qxe5 28 Qd7+ Resigns.

In situations of this type, so-called passive defence, aimed for the moment at only parrying the opponent's threats, proves much more effective.

Black's position in the game **Karpov - Andersson,** Turin, 1982, is inferior: his queenside is weak, and the undermining a3-a4 is threatened. In severe time trouble he nevertheless finds a plan of defence. The first stage is to exchange queens, which will facilitate the defence of his weak pawns.



32 . . . Qg2!

The threat to the d5 pawn (33 Be4? Nc4) forces White to exchange.

33 Qe4	**Qxe4**
34 Rxe4	**Kf8**
35 a4	**Rc8!**

Planning the optimal post at c5.

36 Bd1 Rc5 37 Rd4 Ke7 38 Be2 Kd8 39 Kb3 Kc7

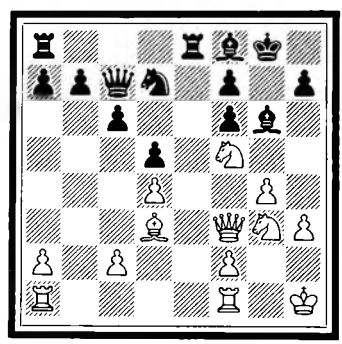
In the endgame the black king has gained the opportunity to become the chief defender . . .

40 a5	**Kb7**
41 Kc2	**Rc7**
42 b4	

The black pawns have been fixed on squares accessible to the bishop, and c3-c4 cannot be prevented. Here too Ulf Andersson takes the only correct decision: to conduct a passive defence, even defence-in-depth, and on no account to change the situation which has arisen on the board. Indeed, even the slightest additional weakening would have given White good chances. For example, 42 . . . f6 43 Bd3 Nxd3 44 Kxd3 Re7 45 Re4 Re5, which looks not at all bad, is called into question by 46 Kd4 Kc7 47 Re3! Kd7 48 c4 bxc4 49 Rc3 Re1 50 Rxc4 Rb1 51 Kd3!, when after 51 . . . Rd1+ 52 Ke4 White threatens 53 Kf5 and 53 Rc6 (I. Zaitsev).

But after **42 . . . Re7 43 Re4 Re8 44 Bd3 Rc8 45 Rf4 Re8 46 Kd2 Rc8 47 Bf1 Rc7 48 Kc2 Rc8 49 Kb3 Rc7 50 Be2 Rc8 51 c4 bxc4+ 52 Bxc4 g5** (note the flexible change of tactics at the necessary moment) **53 Rd4 f5 54 gxf5 Rf8 55 Bd3 Nxd3 56 Rxd3 Rxf5 57 Kc4 h5 58 Re3 Rf4+ 59 Kc3 Rf7 60 Kd4 Kc7 61 Rc3+ Kb7** a draw was agreed.

In the game **Maroczy-Reti,** London Olympiad, 1927, Black has wasted several tempi on capturing the b2 pawn with his queen, and with a broken kingside he has come under a very strong attack. His tenacious defence therefore deserves all the more attention.



19 . . . Bg7

The f8 square is needed for the knight and for the defence of h7.

20 Rg1 Kh8!?

Agreeing to the loss of a tempo, merely to tempt White into exchanging one of his attacking knights. Alas, he increases his offensive power.

21 Nh5 Bxf5!

The only way. After 21 . . . Bxh5 22 gxh5 Black would have succumbed to the attack on the b1-h7 diagonal. But now, in the event of the capture with the pawn, the diagonal will be blocked.

22 Qxf5 Nf8
23 Nxg7!

The most energetic. By capturing the pawn — 23 Nxf6 Re6! 24 Nxh7, White would have conceded the initiative — 24 . . . Rh6.

23 . . . Kxg7
24 g5! Ng6!

Black would have lost after 24 . . . fxg5 25 Qxg5+ Ng6 26 h4.

25 gxf6+ Kh8
26 Rg4 Re6!

Opening the way for the queen to h7.

27 Qh5 Qd8

Parrying the threat of 28 Rh4.

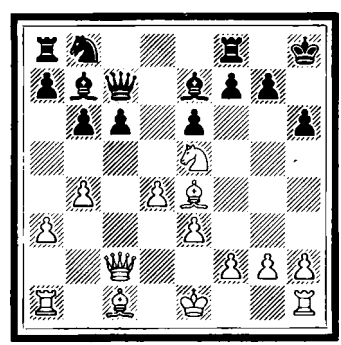
28 f4 Qxf6!

Once again resourceful defence. On 28 . . . Rxf6 there would have followed 29 f5 Nf8 30 Qg5.

29 f5 Re3
30 fxg6 Qf3+
31 Kh2?

In a long series of excellent moves by both sides, White is the first to go wrong. In the end he should have been able to win the endgame after 31 Kg1! fxg6 32 Bxg6 Qxh3 33 Qxh3 (after *33 Rh4??* White is the first to be mated) 33 . . . Rxh3 34 Bd3 Rg8. But now Black's reward for his tenacity could have been perpetual check — 31 . . . Re2+! 32 Bxe2 Qxe2+, when the pinned rook at g4 is unable to cover its king.

But Black became carried away by his counterplay, and went on to lose — **31 . . . fxg6 32 Qh4 Rf8 33 Rxg6 Rf4 34 Qh6!** (Black could still have drawn after 34 Rg4 Rxd3! or 34 Rf1 Re2+!) **34 . . . Qxh3+ 35 Qxh3 Rxh3+ 36 Kxh3 hxg6 37 Re1! Rxd4 38 Re7 Rb4 39 a3 Rb1 40 Bxg6 Ra1 41 Rxb7 Rxa3+ 42 Kg4 c5 43 Kg5,** and Black resigned.



In the game **Miles-Portisch,** European Team Championship, Plovdiv, 1983, White has gained a slight advantage from the opening. By accurate play Black equalizes the position, without prejudice giving up a bishop for the active white knight, and then, exploiting tactical possibilities, launches a counterattack against the advanced white pawns on the queenside.

15 ... Bd6!?
16 Bb2 Bxe5
17 dxe5

Part of White's control over c5 has been lifted.

17 ... Nd7
18 Rc1 a5!

By taking the e5 pawn, Black would have imparted truly armour-piercing strength to the b2 bishop. After 18 ... c5 19 O—O he would have been cramped, whereas now the rook at a8 gains scope.

19 Qc3 axb4
20 axb4 c5

Black's defensive actions are completed, and after 21 Bxb7 Qxb7 22 O—O Ra4 the game would have been level. By aiming, without justification, for a win, White oversteps the mark.

21 Bb1?! Qc6!
22 f3 Qb5
23 Kf2

Practically forced: 23 ... Qxb4 was threatened, and 23 bxc5 was unpleasant because of 23 ... Nxc5, with the theat of 24 ... Na4.

23 ... Rfc8 24 Rhd1 cxb4 25 Qd4 Rxc1 26 Bxc1 Bc6 27 Bb2 Nc5 28 Qd6 Kg8!

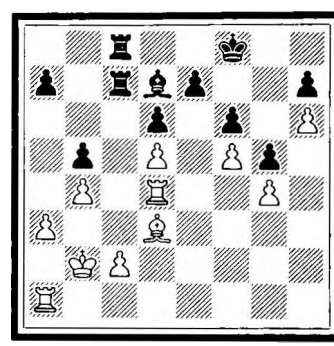
Freeing the rook from having to control f8.

29 Rd4 b3
30 Rf4 Be8

White's activity has essentially been extinguished, whereas he is a pawn down — and what a pawn!

31 Rg4 Ra2! 32 Qd4 Ra4 33 Qd8 Rxg4 34 fxg4 Qd7! 35 Qxd7 Bxd7

The remainder was a matter of technique, and on move 60 White resigned.



In the game **Tal - Sax** from the 1982 Moscow Interzonal Tournament, White has gained an appreciable spatial advantage. Black skilfully combines passive defence (retaining control of the c-file and manoeuvring with his bishop) with active sorties.

29 Re4 Be8 30 Kc1 Rc3 31 Kd2 R8c7 32 Ke3 a5!

Exploiting the fact that the king has moved away from the queenside.

33 Kd2

It is unfavourable for White

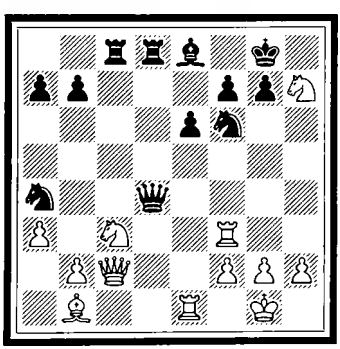
to concede the c5 square: 33 bxa5 R3c5 34 Rd4 Ra7, and the weakness at a3 becomes perceptible.

33	**...**	**a4**
34	**Re3**	**Bf7**
35	**Be4**	**R3c4**
36	**c3**	

Now, if White can prepare the manoeuvre Bf3-e2, then . . .

36	**...**	**Rxe4!**
37	**Rxe4**	**Bxd5**
38	**Rd4**	**Bc4**
39	**Re1**	**Ba2**

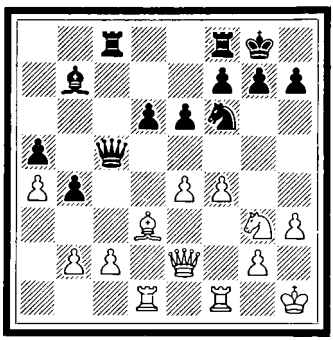
Emphasizing that nowhere can his defensive lines be broken. Draw agreed.



In the game **Nikolic - Andersson,** Wijk aan Zee, 1984, by taking a pawn on h7 with his knight, White has just restored the material balance and weakened the enemy castled position. Nevertheless the position must be considered level, and Black should have maintained the existing status quo. For this 20 . . . Ng4 would have been suitable, and if, for example, 21 h3 (not *21 Re4? Rxc3!*, when White even loses in view of the weakness of his back rank), then 21 . . . Ne5 22 Rfe3 *(22 Nf6+ Kf8!)* 22 . . . Ng6 23 Ng5 Nxc3 with the better endgame in prospect. 21 Ng5 was evidently the strongest for White, vacating h7 for the invasion of his queen, but 21 . . . Nf6! practically forces him to repeat moves *(22 Nh7)*, since the threat of the exchange on c3 followed by . . . Qd2 is pretty unpleasant.

But Black exchanged his central defender — his knight — and came under an unhurried but irresistible attack: **20 . . . Nxh7? 22 Qxh7+ Kf8 22 h3 Ke7** (or 22 . . . Nxc3 23 Rxe6 f6 24 bxc3 Rxc3 25 Qh8+ Kf7 26 Ba2) **23 Re4 Qd6 24 Rd3 Qb8 25 Qxg7,** and White won on move 35.

In the game **Tal - Najdorf,** 'Match of the Century', Belgrade, 1970, White has good grounds for beginning an attack, and he does so. But Black has envisaged in good time an excellent defensive manoeuvre.



21 e5 dxe5
22 fxe5 Nd5
23 Ne4 Qe3!
24 Qh5 Qh6!

For the sake of exchanging queens Black is agreeable to an ugly spoiling of his pawn formation. In doing so he has also taken account of a weakness which has arisen in White's position — the e5 pawn.

25 Qxh6 gxh6
26 Rf3 Rc7
27 Rdf1 Ne7

The threat of further simplification (28 . . . Bxe4 and 29 . . . Ng6) provokes a crisis.

28 Rg3+

Nothing is achieved by 28 Nf6+ Kh8 29 Nxh7 Bxf3 30 Nxf8 Bh5 31 Nh7 Bg6, when for the pawn Black seizes the initiative.

28 . . . Kh8
29 Nd6

Here too after 29 Nf6 Nc6 (but not *29 . . . Ng6? 30 Nxh7! Kxh7 31 Bxg6+)* 30 Nxh7 Rd8 the threats of 31 . . . Rxd3 and 31 . . . Nxe5 give Black sufficient counterplay.

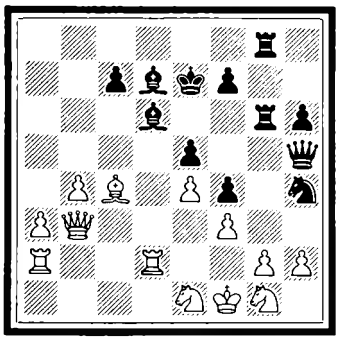
29 . . . Nc6 30 Re3 Kg7 31 Rf4 Ne7 32 Bb5 Ng6 33 Rd4 Bd5 34 c4 bxc3 35 bxc3 Rc5 36 Ne8+ Kh8 37 Nf6 Rfc8 38 c4 Bxc4

The most radical solution. By sacrificing the exchange Black simplifies the position to the utmost and forces a draw.

39 Ne4 Bxb5
40 Nxc5 Rxc5
41 axb5 Rxb5

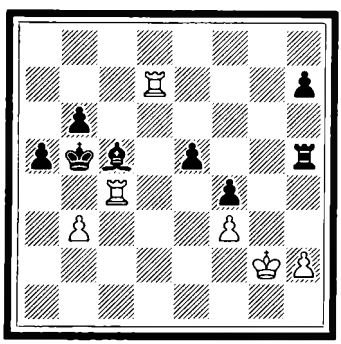
Draw agreed. White cannot hold his e5 pawn — 42 Rde4 a4.

What would you have played?



No. 7

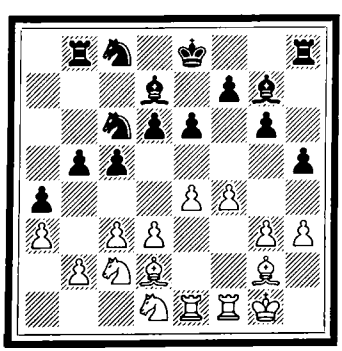
Black has not only lost a pawn — his attack has reached an impasse: White has ultra-securely defended his g2 and f3 pawns. Black must therefore decide: should he seek complications or switch to defence? And if he defends, then against what?



No. 8

With material level, only Black has chances. In addition White has to reckon with the threat of . . . Rg5+ followed by . . . Rg1, commencing an attack on the b3 pawn.

What should White do?



No. 9

It is obvious that White has not extracted any advantage from the opening. Moreover, on the queenside Black holds the initiative, and hence White must stick to tactics of . . .

4
Turning the tide

The keynote of modern chess must nevertheless be considered the ability to defend actively. In the overwhelming majority of cases, modern opening theory promises White a certain advantage: it can be neutralized both by simplifying the position and by passive defence, but most often by active measures. From time immemorial those besieged would make sorties from their fortress in order to keep their opponents in a state of tension, and would fire arrows from the walls at the advancing enemy soldiers — these analogies are also fully applicable to chess.

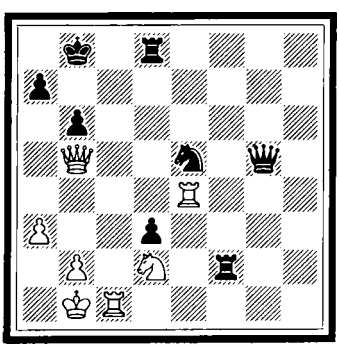
Active defence sometimes borders on counterattack, to which the second part of this book is devoted, and this is natural: a chess game is a synthesis of many known procedures, which sometimes simply follow from one another. Even so, active defence and counterattack can be differentiated: the chief aim of the first is a struggle for equality. Of course, during this struggle it will often be possible to seize the initiative, win material, and achieve overall victory. But in the purely instructional, methodological sense it is better to make the acquaintance of these sections in turn.

Our account of instances when there is sense in choosing passive defence is already complete. But in what way is active defence more promising, and why has it assumed a dominant place in modern-day chess? An answer must be sought in its nature which, incidentally, has been grasped by chess players only comparatively recently — at any rate, compared with the preceding centuries of chess history. It is active defence which enables one side to disrupt the logical course of an unfavourable game, which increases the role of tactics compared with strategy, and which, graphically speaking, changes the character of the struggle: instead of a slow, but sure defeat, one chooses a dangerous battle of en-

counter, where it is easier for the opponent too to go wrong.

The Evidence

We must constantly make the proviso that an impassable rift does not exist between active defence and other forms of defence. Moreover, it can often be very difficult to make a clear distinction between this or that method, this or that procedure, with which the weaker side should defend. They may be interconnected, and to determine the strategy of defence a *generalized* assessment of the position is required.



In the game **Maroczy - Alekhine,** Bled, 1931, in principle Black's extra pawn and active pieces promise him good winning chances. And that is what happened after **42 Nc4 Nf3 43 Qxg5 Nxg5;** in the end White lost.

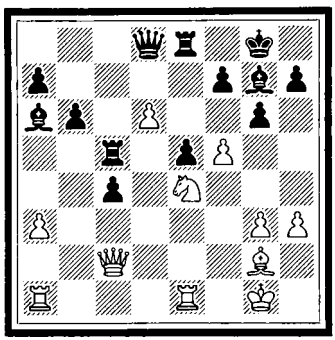
What might have given him hopes of saving the game?

The exchange of knights, the retention of the queens, and a search for heavy-piece counterplay against the black king!

And indeed, in the variation 42 Rxe5! Qxd2 43 Re7 (part of the job is already done: the black king is also under fire, and for the moment Black cannot make use of his extra pawn) 43 . . . Re2 (gaining a tempo to threaten the invasion . . . *Re1*, after which the pawn will advance) 44 Rb7+! Kxb7 45 Qc6+ Ka6 46 Qc4+ Ka5 *(46 . . . b5 47 Qc6+ Ka5 48 Qc7+ Ka4 49 Qxa7+ Kb3 50 Qf7+)* 47 b4+ Ka4 48 Qa6+! Kb3 49 Qc4+ Kxa3 50 Qa6+ Kb3 *(50 . . . Kxb4?? 51 Rc4+ Kb3 52 Qa4* mate) 51 Qc4+ White gives perpetual check. Paradoxically, in the game it was precisely on this move that White resigned.

As we see, the concept of active defence by no means rules out both exchanges, and the prospect of an acceptable endgame, and much more besides. But the main thing, embodied in the very name of the method, is activity, for the sake of which one frequently does not begrudge parting with one's own 'mat-

erial well-being'.



In the 5th game of the **Yusupov-Timman** Candidates Match, Tilburg, 1986, White has more than sufficient compensation for the pawn. His passed pawn in the centre is very strong, especially after the withdrawal of the attacked black rook to the side of the board.

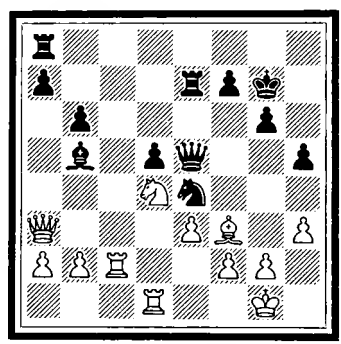
22 . . . Ra5

22 . . . Rc8? loses immediately to 23 Qa4 Bb7 24 d7.

23 g4! Qd7 24 Rad1 Rc8 25 fxg6 hxg6 26 Qf2 Bb7 27 Nf6+ Bxf6 28 Bxb7 Qxb7 29 Qxf6 Qd7 30 Qe7! Rd8 31 Rf1!

And after this White won the f7 pawn and invaded the 7th rank with his rook.

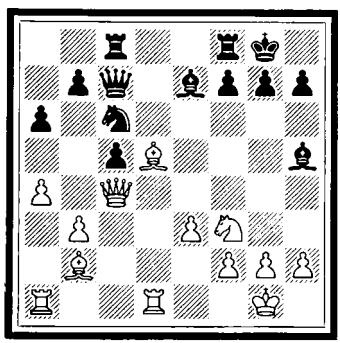
Meanwhile, in the diagram position Black had the possibility of an exchange sacrifice, which would have got rid of the cramping enemy passed pawn and maintained equality — 22 . . . Rd5! 23 fxg6 hxg6 24 Nf6+ Qxf6 25 Bxd5 Qxd6 26 Rad1 Qc5+ 27 Kg2 Re7!, and White cannot avert the exchange of his active bishop.



It was active defence that could have saved Black in the game **Korchnoi - Kurajica,** Hastings, 1971-72, after White in the above position had sacrificed his bishop — **23 Bxh5?!**

After calculating that 23 . . . gxh5 would fail to 24 Qxe7 Qxe7 25 Nf5+ Kf6 26 Nxe7 Kxe7 27 Rc7+, Black replied **23 . . . Rh8,** after which he was a pawn down and he lost the game. Meanwhile he could have drawn by 23 . . . Qxh5! 24 Qxe7 Qxd1+ 25 Kh2. The threats of Rc7 and Ne6+ appear to give White a strong attack, and in addition the bishop is hanging. But — 25

. . . Nd2!, with the idea of perpetual check after 26 . . . Nf1+, while in the event of 26 Kg3 Ne4+ the white king is driven back again to h2.



In the game **Botvinnik - Euwe,** Groningen, 1946, White has a clear advantage in the centre. He has occupied the d-file and he now intensifies the pressure.

17 Bxc6! Qxc6
18 Ne5 Qe8!

The first precise defensive reply. The d7 square is covered, and Black keeps an 'X-ray' eye on the advanced white knight.

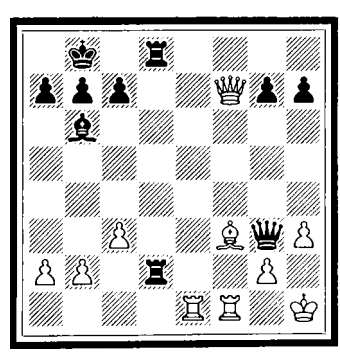
19 Rd5

Threatening 20 Nd7, as well as 20 g4 and 21 Rad1.

19 . . . Rd8?

Black switches to passive defence, which could have placed him in a critical position. Meanwhile, from e8 his queen could have fulfilled another function — that of supporting the active defensive move 19 . . . b5! By driving the white queen from its ideal position, Black would have obtained a good game, for example, 20 Qc3 f6 21 Nd7 Qf7 22 e4 Rfd8 or 20 Qf4 Rd8, wresting control of the open file.

But in the game, after the possible and logical 20 g4 Bg6 (here *20 . . . b5* is now too late in view of *21 Rxd8)* 21 Rad1 Rxd5 22 Qxd5 Qc8 23 Nd7 he would have ended up in a difficult position, since 23 . . . Rd8 runs into the combination 24 Bxg7! Bc2*(24 . . . Kxg7 25 Qe5+)* 25 Bc3 Bxd1 26 Qe5 f6 27 Qe6+, mating.

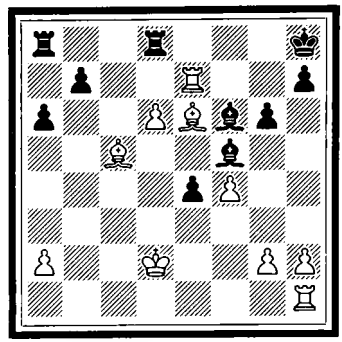


In the game **Falkbeer - Anderssen,** Berlin, 1851, White's downfall was caused by the weakness of the dark

squares around his king — **25 b4 c6 26 Re8 Bc7 27 Rxd8+ Rxd8 28 Kg1 Qh2+ 29 Kf2 Bb6+ 30 Ke1 Qg3+ 31 Ke2 Qe5+ 32 Be4 Qxe4** mate — and ... by insufficient determination in defence. By an active counterattack he could have saved the game — 25 Re7! Now 25 ... c6 is not possible, and 26 Qxg7 is threatened, driving the black queen from its main attacking position. 25 ... Rf2 can be met by 26 Rfe1, maintaining the threat of capturing on g7 as well as the spectacular 27 Qd5!

And in the event of the natural 25 ... Rxb2, apart from 26 Qxg7 with an inferior endgame, White has a counterattack against b7. For example, 26 Qd5! c6 27 Rxb7+ Kxb7 28 Qxc6+ Ka6 29 Qa4+ Ba5 30 Qc4+ Rb5 *(30 ... Kb6 31 Qc6* mate) 31 Rb1 (or *31 a4*) and White wins — 31 ... Rb8 32 Bc6 or 31 ... Qe5 32 Bb7+ Kxb7 33 Rxb5+.

An incorrectly chosen method of defence condemned Black to defeat in the game **Browne - Ftacnik,** Gjovik, 1983. The audacious white rook is clearly immune — 23 ... Bxe7 24 Bd4+, mating, and therefore Black

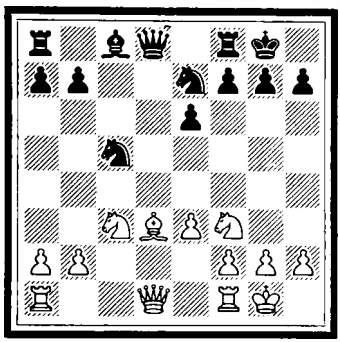


has two ways of defending. He passively opened an escape square for his king — **23 ... h6?,** and after **24 Rf7 Bxe6 25 Rxf6 Bxa2 26 Rxg6 Kh7 27 f5 Bf7 28 Rf6 Bd5 29 Be3 h5 30 Rc1 Bc6 31 Rc5 Rd7 32 Rh6+ Kg7 33 Re5** he came under a very strong attack.

Meanwhile, in the diagram position the opponent's onslaught could have been parried by the active counterattack 23 ... Rac8!, when Black would have been quite satisfied with either 24 Ba3 *(24 Bb4 Bxe7 25 Bc3+ Rxc3)* 24 ... e3+, or 24 Bxc8 Bxe7 25 Bd4+ Kg8 26 dxe7 Rxd4+ 27 Kc3 Rd3+ 28 Kc4 Kf7 29 Bxb7 Ra3.

Here in the game **Capablanca - Molina,** Buenos Aires, 1911, the future World Champion began an attack with the already then patented

bishop sacrifice on h7.



12 Bxh7+ Kxh7
13 Ng5+ Kg6

13 . . . Kh6 14 Nxf7+ would have led to the loss of the queen.

14 Qg4

This is it — the moment of choice. Should the king run away from the threatened discovered check, or should the defence be based on a different, more active principle — the pursuit of the white queen?

14 . . . f5

The second alternative is chosen. In fact, "The tempting move 14 . . . e5 would have been fatal. For example: 15 Ne6+ Kf6 16 f4! e4 17 Qg5+ Kxe6 18 Qe5+ Kd7 19 Rfd1+ Nd3 20 Nxe4 Kc6 (if *20 . . . Ke8, 21 Nd6+* wins the queen) 21 Rxd3 Qxd3 22 Rc1+ Kb6 (if *22 . . . Kd7* — mate in two) 23 Qc7+, and mate in five moves" (Capablanca).

15 Qg3 Kh6?

"An excessively passive move", mildly commented Emanuel Lasker, when he analyzed this position and indicated the correct way to save the game. Indeed, Black betrays himself and ceases to harass the white queen. Correct would have been 15 . . . f4! 16 exf4 (if *16 Qg4, 16 . . . e5* is now all right) 16 . . . Nf5 17 Qg4 Nh6 and White must either agree to a draw *(18 Qg3 Nf5)*, or take an excessive risk, since after 18 Qh4 Qd2 the initiative passes to Black.

As it is, the mistake committed by Black in defence leads to a rapid defeat.

16 Qh4+ Kg6
17 Qh7+ Kf6

17 Kxg5 18 Qxg7+ would have led to mate in a few moves.

18 e4 Ng6
19 exf5

19 f4 was even stronger, and if 19 . . . fxe4, then 20 Rad1 Qb6 21 Rd6.

19 . . . exf5
20 Rad1 Nd3
21 Qh3

Parrying the threat of 21 . . . Rh8.

21 ... Ndf4
22 Qg3 Qc7
23 Rfe1 Ne2+?

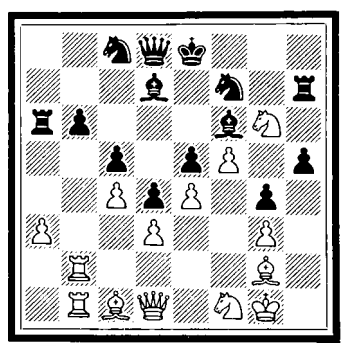
This loses immediately, but as Capablanca pointed out, the game could not have been saved in other variations, for example 23 . . . Be6 24 Rxe6+ Nxe6 25 Nd5 mate, or 23 . . . Bd7 24 Nd5+ Nxd5 25 Nh7+ Kf7 26 Qxc7 Nxc7 27 Rxd7+ Kg8 28 Nxf8.

24 Rxe2 Qxg3 25 Nh7+ Kf7 26 hxg3 Rh8 27 Ng5+ Kf6 28 f4 Resigns.

Complications

As a little joke it could be asserted that, when Pushkin wrote "horses and men became piled up" (a line from his poem *Poltav* — Translator's note), he had in mind . . . complications on the chess board, the main form of active defence. It is here that, for a time, even the most correct strategy has to concede its dominant position to tactics, as weak squares and scrupulously weighed material balances fade into the background. It is the dynamism of the pieces which becomes the most important, as well as . . . psychological factors, which do not always allow the side which has just been attacking to retune suddenly for a double-edged battle of encounter.

So that, while defence by exchanges and simplification is well justified from the viewpoint of the basic laws of strategy, the search for complications is sometimes in the nature of a chess 'bluff' and stems from a feeling of desperation. Here, for example, is a frank — and instructive — account by the experienced trainer **Mark Dvoretsky** of his game with **Averkin** (Black), Odessa, 1974.



"Black intends, by playing 30 . . . Nh8, to exchange knights, which will force White constantly to reckon with the threat of . . . h4. Then the exchange of dark-square bishops is possible (although not essential), which will emphasize the weakness of the a3 pawn. By creating threats on both the queenside

and the kingside, Black will carry out one of the two breaks *(. . . h4 or . . . b5)* and will gain a decisive advantage.

Thus White has nothing to lose. His position is strategically lost, and with normal continuations he cannot obtain counterplay. Taking account of this, and also the opponent's approaching time trouble, which could be exploited only in sharp play, White decided on a clearly incorrect piece sacrifice with the aim of disrupting the normal course of events . . ."

30 Qe2 Nh8
31 Nf4?! exf4
32 gxf4 Bh4!

Parrying the threat of 33 e5 and 34 e6, which would also have been maintained in the event of 32 . . . Be7 by the interposition of 33 f6!

33 f6

The same tactics of sharpening the struggle. So that the white pieces should at least have something of a breathing-space, the pawns must sacrifice themselves.

33 . . . Bxf6?

And here comes a mistake. The correct 33 . . . Qxf6 34 e5 Qe7 would have 'pacified' White.

34 e5 Bh4
35 e6 Ba4
36 f5

Some compensation for the piece has after all been obtained: Black's bishops and knights are clearly misplaced. Nevertheless, with 36 . . . Bf6 followed by . . . Nd6, . . . Qc7 and . . . Bc6 he could have gradually restored the harmonious working of his forces. But — he occupies this square with the wrong piece!

36 . . . Qf6?!
37 Qe4 Bg5

On 37 . . . Nd6 38 Qd5 Nxf5 White has the more than unpleasant 39 Rxb6.

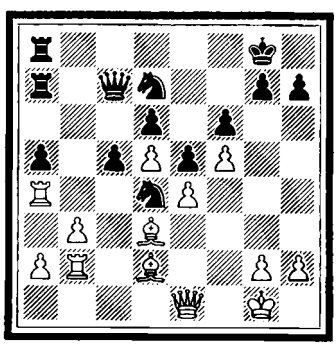
38 Bxg5 Qxg5
39 Qe5 Rh6?

A time trouble mistake — after **40 Bb7 Ra7 41 Bxc8** Black resigned. But even after other replies the threat of 40 Qb8 would seem to compensate for the missing piece, since 39 . . . Qd8 is strongly met by 40 f6.

In the above instance the most significant and, for us, the most important thing is not the 'bluff' aspect of White's entire plan, but the means to an end. It can be defined as follows: by means of a sacrifice to increase greatly the dynamism of the pieces, to

convert 'material' into 'mind' and to place 'mind' over 'matter'. This and only this is the point of the complications: a smaller number of active forces balances or even surpasses a greater number of pieces and pawns which have lost their aggression, mobility, harmony or security.

The most varied 'payment' for activity is possible.



In the game **Karpov - Taimanov,** Leningrad, 1977, White has an undisputed advantage. The weak a5 pawn requires constant surveillance, and Black is faced with a dilemma: how should he defend? If he passively ties his forces to the defence of his rook's pawn, then White, exploiting in addition his spatial advantage, will also begin attacking on the kingside, with Kh1, Bc3, g2-g4, Rg2, Bd2, g4-g5 etc. There will be no way of countering this offensive, and Black takes the only correct decision: to begin active defence at the cost of the weak pawn.

25 ... Nb6!
26 Rxa5

Not 26 Bxa5 Nxa4 27 Bxc7 Nxb2 with material gain for Black.

26 ... c4!
27 Bf1

The second black pawn is 'poisoned': 27 Bxc4? Nxc4 28 Rxa7 Qxa7 29 bxc4 Nf3++ or 27 bxc4? Rxa5 28 Bxa5 Qc5 29 Bxb6 Nf3++ 30 Kf1 Nxe1 31 Bxc5 Nxd3.

27 ... Rxa5
28 Bxa5 Qc5
29 Bxb6 Qxb6
30 Kh1 cxb3
31 axb3

This concludes the first stage of active defence. For the pawn Black's pieces have gained freedom. But it only needs him to reduce the 'tempo of the defence', and White, after gradually regrouping, will obtain chances of realizing his material advantage. This means that the active play must continue!

31 ... g6!
32 fxg6 hxg6
33 b4 Kg7
34 b5?!

White underestimates his

opponent's counter-chances. 34 Bd3!? would have been a useful inclusion.

34 . . . f5
35 exf5 Nxf5

The second stage is concluded: the 'fine' knight at d4 has become an active piece. White may still have retained an advantage, but it must now be sought under the microscope. At any rate, a realistic variation would appear to be 36 Qf2 Qxf2 37 Rxf2 Ra1 38 Kg1 Rb1 39 Re2 Nd4 40 Rd2 Nxb5 41 Kf2 with an equal endgame. But White, aiming through inertia for a win, falls into a trap.

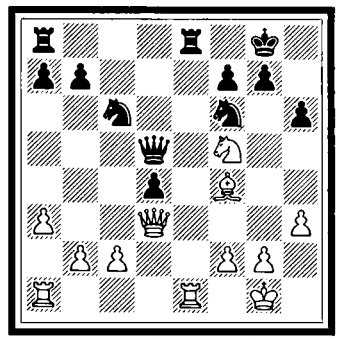
36 Rb3 Qd4
37 b6?

37 Rb1 was essential, although here too 37 . . . Ra3 creates the threat which occurred in the game. True, in this case it would have led only to a draw: 38 b6 Ng3+! 39 Qxg3 *(39 hxg3? Ra8!!)* 39 . . . Rxg3 40 hxg3 Qe4 41 Rb5 Qe1 42 Kg1 Qe3+.

37 . . . Ra1
38 Rb1 Ng3+!

White resigned in view of the afore-mentioned rook retreat — 39 hxg3 Ra8!, with mate on the h-file.

In the game **Zhilin-Damsky,**



Rostov-on-Don, 1957, White's pieces are menacingly active. It is not apparent how they can be exchanged, and in search of a defence Black pins his hopes on complications: after all, in attacking it would seem inevitable that White's forces will begin to 'hang'.

18 . . . Rad8

By defending his d-pawn, Black wishes to switch his second knight too to the kingside.

19 Bxh6 Ne5

It stands to reason that the bishop is immune *(19 . . . gxh6?? 20 Qg3+*, mating), but, on the other hand, at the cost of a pawn Black achieves his aim.

20 Qg3 Ng6
21 Rxe8+

The most accurate — the rook at d8, which defends the queen, is diverted. 21 Qg5 is

unpleasantly met by 21 . . . Ne4, while after 21 Nxg7 Rxe1+ 22 Rxe1 Kh7 White is forced to part with a piece.

21 . . . Rxe8
22 Qg5 Re5

Here 22 . . . Ne4?? loses to 23 Ne7+, and so Black continues to sharpen the situation.

23 g4 Qf3

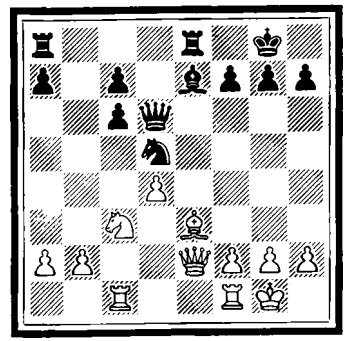
Here too 23 . . . Ne4? still does not work, for the same reason. But now this counter-attacking move is on the agenda.

24 Bxg7 Ne4
25 Qd8+ Kh7

Now the attempt to continue the struggle by 26 Rf1 Nxf2 27 Bxe5 Nxh3+ 28 Kh2 Qxf1 would have led to a position in which it is the white king that is more likely to come under attack *(29 Qe8 Ng5,* or *29 Bxd4 Nhf4).*

Therefore — **26 Bxe5,** allowing a draw by perpetual check after **26 . . . Qxf2+.**

Black's spoiled pawn formation in the 2nd game of the **Timman - Yusupov** Candidates Match, Holland, 1985, determines White's plan: frontal and flank pressure on the c6 pawn. But the next moves by both players seem strange at first sight.



17 Nxd5! Qxd5!

The fact that White should exchange the opponent's most active piece, one which, it could be said, holds together the entire position — this is understandable. But in doing so he has allowed Black to repair his pawn formation, and for some reason the latter has declined this invitation.

The point is that both grandmasters assessed the position primarily from the viewpoint of the dynamics of the pieces, and not the statics of weak points. The ideal place for the black bishop is at d6, but after 17 . . . cxd5?! 18 Qf3 with the threat of 19 Bf4, Black would have no longer been able to carry out this deployment.

This decision of the defending side proves correct.

18 Qc4 Bd6
19 b3 Re6!

The c6 pawn could have been indirectly defended, by gaining a tempo with 19 . . . Qa5, and if 20 Rc2 Re6 21 g3 Rae8.

But Black prefers not to try and cling to material equality, but to complete his regrouping as quickly as possible and obtain positional compensation for the lost pawn. This would seem to be the optimal decision.

20 g3 Qf5
21 Qc2!

First driving the queen from its ideal position.

21 . . . Qh5
22 Qxc6 Rae8

Threatening 23 . . . Bxg3.

23 Qg2 Re4
24 Rfe1

Parrying the possible march of the black f-pawn to f4.

24 . . . Qf5
25 Bd2 h5

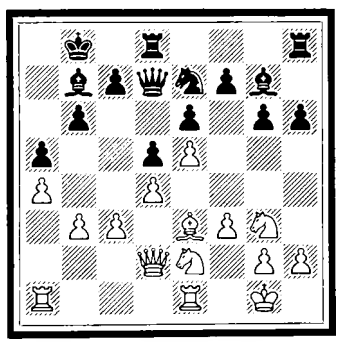
If not the f-pawn, then the h-pawn! The threat of its advance (in some variations — even to h3) forces White to discharge the situation.

26 f3 Rxe1+ 27 Rxe1 Rxe1+ 28 Bxe1 Qd3! 29 Qf2 Ba3! 30 Kg2 Bc1 31 Qf1!

White returns the pawn, but consolidates his position, otherwise the advantage would have passed to the opponent.

31 . . . Qxd4
32 Qe2 Qb2
33 Qxb2 Bxb2

The exchange of queens practically deprives the players of any chance of winning. Within 11 moves a draw was agreed.



With complete material equality and the advantage of the two bishops, in the game **Korzubov - Lerner,** Tallinn, 1983, Black is doomed. The opening of lines, where his king has taken shelter, cannot be prevented, his bishops are inactive, and there are no targets for counterplay.

Therefore the sacrifice of two pawns in search of complications is probably the best, and even the only chance.

20 . . . f6! 21 exf6 Bxf6 22 Bxh6 g5!? 23 Bxg5 Bxg5 24 Qxg5 Rdg8 25 Qe3 Ng6

In parting with his own kingside, Black has nevertheless achieved something: he has been the first to open files against the enemy king and is ready to concentrate all his forces on the kingside. At any rate, for the moment White's material advantage has no significance.

26 Nf4

A dubious decision. Instead of this active move, it would have been preferable for a time to defend passively with 26 Nf1 and 27 Neg3, although even in this case, by bringing out his bishop to a6, Black has a possibility of strengthening his counterplay.

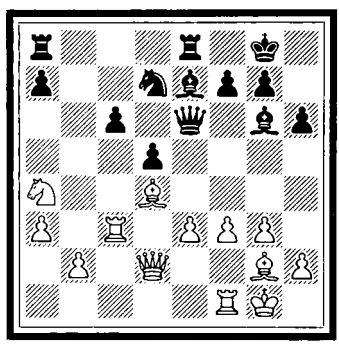
26 . . . Qh7
27 Nfh5 Bc8!?

In this very sharp position Black combines active and defensive measures.

The immediate 27 . . . Qe7, with the idea of invading at h4, is refuted by the direct 28 Qxe6 followed by the return of the queen to g4 or h3.

28 b4 Qe7
29 bxa5 Qh4
30 axb6 Rxh5
31 Nxh5 Qxh5

The further part of the game took place in severe time trouble for White, who committed some inaccuracies, but for us this is of no significance: by the skilfully provoked complications Black has successfully solved his defensive problems.



In the 10th game of the **Smyslov - Kasparov** Candidates Match, Vilnius, 1984, White's positional achievements are clearly apparent. The fire of his heavy pieces will be concentrated on the backward pawn on the c-file. But passive defence here is not essential, since White's slightly weakened kingside (the f-pawn has taken a step forward!) allows Black with a minimal sacrifice to initiate counterplay. And this is what he does.

22 . . . Rab8!
23 Re1

The capture 23 Bxa7 leads to a mutual elimination of forces and a draw after 23 . . . Ra8 24 Nc5 Nxc5 25 Bxc5 Bxc5 26 Rxc5 Qxe3+ 27 Qxe3 Rxe3 28 Rxc6 Rb8, as does 23 b4 Nb6 (this is the point of Black's preceding move) 24 Nxb6 axb6 25 Rfc1 c5.

23 . . .	**a5**
24 Bf1	**h5**
25 Rec1	**Ne5**
26 Bxe5	

Without this White cannot win the c-pawn.

26 . . .	**Qxe5**
27 Rxc6	**Bf6**
28 R6c5	

The attempt to retain the e3 pawn would have given Black sufficient counterplay: 28 Rc3 d4! or 28 Re1 h4!

28 . . .	**Qxe3+**
29 Qxe3	**Rxe3**
30 Rxd5	**Rxf3**
31 Be2	

Forced, since 31 Rxa5? Bd4+! loses for White.

31 . . .	**Re3**
32 Bxh5	**Bxh5**
33 Rxh5	**g5!**

Unexpectedly the rook finds itself offside, White's forces are scattered, and it is now he who has to defend.

34 Nc3!

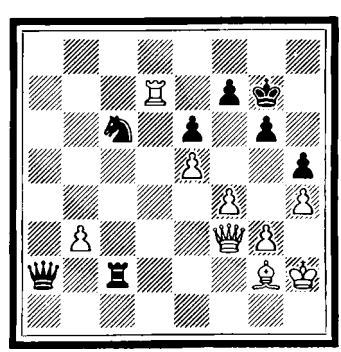
Exploiting a tactical possibility *(34 . . . Rxb2? 35 Nd5)*, White brings up reinforcements.

34 . . . Rd8 35 Rc2 Kg7 36 Kg2 Kg6 37 g4 Rd4 38 h3!?

White displays admirable coolness. In the variation 38 Rh3 Rxg4+ 39 Rg3 Rgxg3+ 40 hxg3 Be5 White would have relieved the situation and . . . incurred a very difficult ending. But now in the event of 38 . . . Rdd3 39 Ne2 Be5 40 Rc6+ f6 41 Rc2 the stray white rook has the possibility of coming into play via h8.

Perhaps it was for this reason that Black offered a draw, although he could still have continued the struggle with 38 . . . Rc4!

A whole series of defensive procedures was demonstrated by Black in the game **Vaganian - Petrosian,** 50th USSR Championship, Moscow, 1983.



41 g4!?

Beginning an attack, and a dangerous one, on the seemingly fairly secure black king.

41 ... hxg4
42 Qxg4 Rd2!

By the threat of an exchange Black gains time to include his knight in active defence, and also . . . his queen!

43 Rc7 Nd4
44 h5

With the threat of nothing less than 45 Qxg6+, mating.

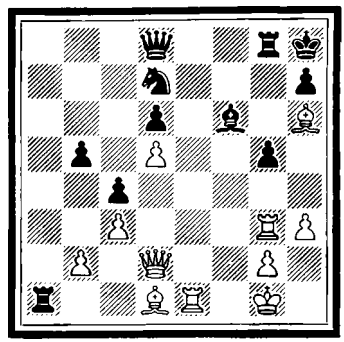
44 ... Qb1!
45 h6+ Kh8!

After the capture of the pawn Black would have been mated, whereas now his king can shelter behind it.

46 Rxf7 Qe4!

The maximum activation of all Black's pieces for defence forces White, two pawns up, to agree a draw. Indeed, he cannot avoid perpetual check, for example, 47 Rg7 Nf3+ 48 Kh3 (he loses after *48 Kg3 Rxg2+ 49 Kxg2 Nxe5+)* 48 . . . Ng1+ 49 Kh2 Nf3+.

In the game **Tseitlin - Averbakh,** 38th USSR Championship, Riga, 1970, *(see diagram above),* White continued his offensive with **36 Bh5,** intending after **36 ... Rxe1+ 37 Qxe1** to create the threat of 38 Bf7, winning the



exchange. Saving it by 37 . . . Qb6+ would have left the g5 pawn insufficiently covered, and instead Black found a possibility of active defence.

37 ... Be5!

Driving back — either now or a little later — one of the opponent's attackers.

38 Bf7

Consistent and apparently logical. Since 38 Re3? is bad because of 38 . . . Qf6, and 38 Rf3 can be met by 38 . . . Bf4 39 Bf7 Ne5, White reckons on 38 . . . Bxg3 39 Qxg3 and, whichever bishop Black gives up his rook for, he stands worse. But Black continues defending actively, even if this means sacrificing the exchange.

38 ... Qf6!
39 Bxg8 Qxh6
40 Be6 Nf6

The position has radically changed, in the first instance

because of the bishop's pitiful position at e6. White should now have sought at least approximate equality by a counterattack — 41 Qa1!? Bxg3 42 Qa8+ Kg7 43 Qb7+ Nd7! 44 Qxd7+ Kf6, but he prefers passive defence, which very quickly cracks.

41 Re3 g4
42 Qf2 gxh3
43 gxh3 Bh2+!
44 Kf1

44 Kxh2 fails to 44 . . . Nxg4+, while after 44 Qxh2 Qxe3+ 45 Qf2 Qe5 the black queen and knight combination is much stronger than White's queen and bishop and he faces a difficult struggle for a draw.

44 . . . Bf4
45 Ke2

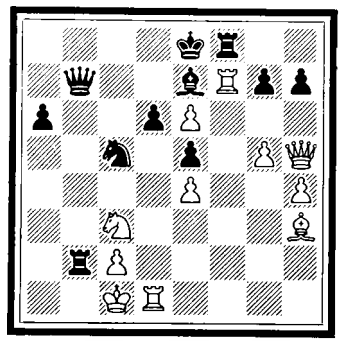
White would be glad to return the exchange, since after 45 Re2 Qxh3+ the black knight joins the attack via g4.

45 . . . Qg5
46 Bc8 Bxe3

Winning, at the minimum, a pawn and the game.

47 Qxe3 Qg2+ 48 Ke1 Qxb2 49 Qb6 Qb1+ 50 Kd2 Qd3+ 51 Kc1 Qxc3+ 52 Kb1 Qb3+ White resigns.

In the game **Levchenkov - V. Zhuravlev,** Riga, 1971, model examples of active defence helped both players in turn to emerge from a difficult position.



In principle both kings are poorly defended, but it is nevertheless Black's which feels worse of. Defence by exchanging — 22 . . . Rxf7, does not work in view of 23 Qxf7+ Kd8 24 Qg8+ Kc7 25 Nd5+ Kc6 26 Qe8+ mating, and defence by running away — 22 . . . Kd8, also fails — 23 Rxd6+ Bxd6 24 Rxb7 Rxb7 25 Qd1 Kc7 26 Nd5+ Kc6 *(26 . . . Kb8 27 d7!)* 27 Ne3 with a very strong attack. He therefore resorts to an exchange sacrifice.

22 . . . Rxc2+! 23 Kxc2 Qb3+ 24 Kd2 Qb2+ 25 Ke1 Qxc3+ 26 Ke2 Qc2+ 27 Kf1 Rxf7+ 28 exf7+ Kf8 29 Bg2 Nxe4 30 Bxe4 Qxe4

With the material balance nominally restored, the decisive role here is played by the

open position of the white king; Black has the initiative, and he plans the decisive inclusion of his bishop in the attack.

But White is also saved by active counterplay.

31 Re1 Qh1+
32 Kf2 Qh2+
33 Kf1 d5
34 Qxh7!

Gaining a tempo for defence by the threat to the black king.

34 . . . Qh3+ 35 Ke2 Qg4+ 36 Kf1 Qf3+ 37 Kg1 Bc5+ 38 Kh2 Kxf7

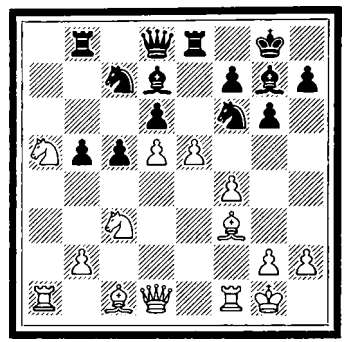
Alas, Black has no time to capture the rook.

39 g6+! Kf6
40 Qg8!!

Once again the threat of mate prevents Black from concluding his attack.

40 . . . Kxg6 41 Qe8+ Kh7 42 Qxe5 Bd6 43 Qxd6 Qf2+ 44 Kh3 Qxe1 45 Qxd5 Draw agreed.

By advancing e4-e5 White has begun a painstakingly prepared offensive in the game **Grechikhin - Kalinin,** Kuibyshev, 1984. But it transpires that Black has no less painstakingly stocked up with defensive resources.



17 . . . dxe5
18 fxe5!

It turns out that the tempting 18 d6 is parried by a piece sacrifice — 18 . . . e4 *(18 . . . Ne6 19 fxe5; 18 . . . Na8* or *18 . . . Na6 - 19 Nc6)* 19 dxc7 Qxc7 20 Be2 c4, with the threat of 21 . . . Ra8 and more than sufficient compensation.

18 . . . Rxe5
19 Nb7! Qf8!

After 19 . . . Rxb7 20 d6 Rb8 21 dxc7 Qxc7 22 Bf4 Black stands badly, not because of the loss of the exchange, but in view of the threatened invasion of his position by the opponent's heavy pieces.

20 Bf4 Nh5!
21 Bxe5 Bxe5
22 Bxh5 gxh5

White has a material advantage, but his knights, having no strong points, are vulnerable, and the initiative is

about to change hands.

23 Ra7 b4
24 d6!

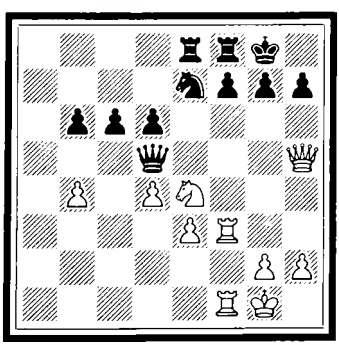
The only way of avoiding material loss: if 24 Ne4 Nb5.

24 . . . Nb5 25 Nxb5 Bxb5 26 d7 Bd4+ 27 Kh1 Bxf1 28 d8=Q

For 28 Qxf1 White does not have time — 28 . . . c4.

28 . . . Rxd8
29 Nxd8 Bxg2+
30 Kxg2 Qxd8

The draw agreed in this position was quite in order.



Despite its apparent simplicity, this position from the game **Tseshkovsky - Makarychev,** 47th USSR Championship, Minsk, 1979, is full of life. For the pawn White has a certain initiative, but delay for him would be fatal. Hence — a piece sacrifice and a very strong attack.

26 Nf6+ gxf6
27 Rg3+ Ng6

Mate results from 27 . . . Kh8 28 Qh6 Ng6 29 Rh3.

28 Rf5 Qe4!

The only way of defending against the mating threats. The queen sets up an 'X-ray' defence of h7 and simultaneously prepares to harass the white king.

29 Rh3 Qb1+
30 Rf1

It is clear that running away with the king would not enable it to escape the checks.

30 . . . Nf4!

Defence — by counter-attack. Now on 31 exf4 Black has 31 . . . Re1, while 31 Qg4+ Qg6 32 Qxf4 Re4 33 Qxd6 f5 would allow him to hold on, e.g. 34 Qd7 Rg4 35 g3 Qe6.

31 Rg3+ Kh8
32 Qg4 Ne2+!

Miracles of bravery! At the cost of its life the knight diverts the white queen from its attacking position. Note that 32 . . . Qg6 would have lost to 33 Qxf4 Re4 34 Qf3.

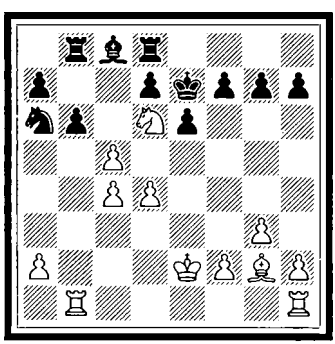
33 Qxe2 Qe4
34 Qf2

On 34 Rxf6 Black has 34 . . . Qxd4.

34 . . . Re6 35 h3 Rg8 36 Rxg8+ Kxg8 37 Qg3+ Kf8 38 Rf3 Qb1+ 39 Kh2 Qxb4

40 Qh4 Qb1

Here the game was adjourned. Had he sealed 41 Rxf6 White would hardly have risked losing, but he played for an attack — **41 Rg3,** and by continued accurate defence Black managed to realize his material advantage: **41 . . . Qe4 42 Qh6+ Ke7 43 Rg8 Kd7! 44 Ra8 Re8! 45 Ra6 Rg8 46 Ra2 Ke7 47 Qh5 Rg6! 48 g4 h6 49 Ra7+ Ke6 50 Ra8 Qf3 51 e4 Qf2+ 52 Kh1 Qf1+ 53 Kh2 Qf4+ 54 Kg1 Qg5 55 Qxg5 Rxg5 etc.**



In the 1st game of the **Kasparov - Karpov** World Championship Match, Moscow, 1985, the assessment of the position is not in doubt. The only question that remains open is whether or not White's advantage is sufficient for a win. An answer was obtained after Black's next move.

18 . . . Nc7?

Black tries by 'therapeutic methods' to get rid of the powerful knight at d6, but the road to salvation lay through an expiatory piece sacrifice — 18 . . . bxc5! 19 Rxb8 (or *19 Nxc8+ Rdxc8 20 Bb7 Rxb7 21 Rxb7 cxd4 22 Rxa7 Nc5,* and Black's counterplay in the centre cannot be underestimated) 19 . . . Nxb8 20 dxc5 Na6!! 21 Nxc8+ Rxc8 22 Bb7 Rxc5 23 Bxa6 Ra5 24 Bb7 Rxa2+ 25 Ke3 Rc2 when, in Kasparov's opinion, Black has "splendid drawing chances".

But this is what happened in the game.

19 Rb4! Ne8
20 Nxe8

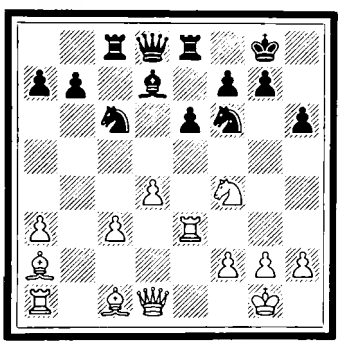
White could have won more quickly by 20 Nxc8+! Rbxc8 21 cxb6 axb6 22 Kd3 Nd6 23 Rc1 Rb8 24 Rcb1 Rbc8 (or *24 . . . Rdc8 25 a4!,* and there is no defence against the threat of *a4-a5*) 25 Ra4! Rb8 26 Ra6 Rdc8 27 Rb4, and Black cannot save the game.

20 . . . Kxe8

Another possibility of exploiting the king's position at e2 would have been given by 20 . . . Rxe8! 21 Rhb1 Bb7 22 d5 exd5 23 cxd5 Kf8+ 24 Kd2 Ra8!, "with fair chances of a draw" (Kasparov).

21 Rhb1 Ba6 22 Ke3 d5 23 cxd6 Rbc8 24 Kd3 Rxd6 25 Ra4 b5 26 cxb5 Rb8 27 Rab4 Bb7 28 Bxb7 Rxb7 29 a4

And after lasting out until move 42, Black resigned without resuming the game.



In the game **Panczyk - Yusupov,** Warsaw, 1985, the opening has just concluded, but Black already has to make a fundamental choice of plan. The opponent's forces are very obviously aimed at his kingside. Of course, he could have brought up reserves, but 15 . . . Ne7?! 16 c4 Nf5 17 Rd3 followed by Bb2 would only have delayed the attack, but not eliminated it. Besides, White's pieces are extremely harmoniously placed.

Taking this into account, Black chose a plan of active defence involving a piece sacrifice. In doing so he noticed a slight weakness of the back rank, which has arisen after the advance of the white rook.

15 . . . e5!
16 Nh5! exd4
17 Rg3

Creating a mass of dangerous threats. At the board Black saw, for example, that 17 . . . Nxh5? allows the winning combination 18 Bxf7+! Kxf7 *(18 . . . Kh8 19 Bxh5 Re5 20 cxd4,* and if *20 . . . Nxd4,* then simply *21 Bb2)* 19 Qxh5+ Kg8 *(19 . . . Kf8 20 Bxh6!)* 20 Rxg7+! Kxg7 21 Bxh6+ Kf6 22 Bg5+. And on 17 . . . Ng4 White has the simple 18 h3! But . . .

17 . . . Bg4!
18 Nxf6+ Qxf6
19 Rxg4 dxc3

The powerful passed pawn and the disharmony of the white pieces — despite there being one more of them — forces Black's position to be preferred. The defence has succeeded!

20 Be3 c2
21 Qf1?

As often happens, an enforced transition from attack to defence is accompanied by mistakes. 21 Qe1 was more tenacious, whereas now White loses by force.

21 . . . Rxe3!
22 fxe3 Qxf1+
23 Rxf1 Ne5

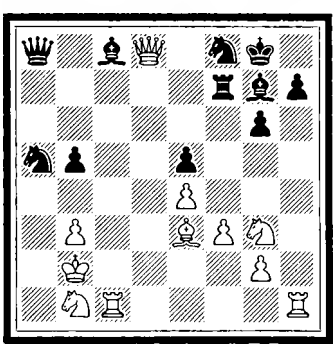
Even with an extra rook there is no defence against the two threats *(24 . . . Nxg4* and *24 . . . c1=Q)*.

24 Rgf4

Or 24 Bxf7+ Kh8! 25 Rgf4 c1=Q 26 Rxc1 Rxc1+ 27 Kf2 Nd3+ and wins.

24 . . . c1=Q 25 Rxc1 Rxc1+ 26 Rf1 Rxf1+ 27 Kxf1 Ng4! White resigns.

Finally, an oustanding example of resourcefulness in search of complications when defending is provided by the game **Timman - Kasparov,** Bugojno, 1982.



Black's only hope of saving the game, and a not very real one, can be considered the relatively 'bare' white king. But at first sight the exchange of queens seems unavoidable, and in the endgame, the exchange down, he will have no chance . . .

24 . . . Nc4+!

Black is now a rook down, but the queens are kept on and the white is even further exposed.

25 bxc4 Rd7!
26 Qe8

"Logical, since on 26 Qb6 Black has the dangerous 26 . . . Rb7, while after 26 Qh4 the queen is out of play. Besides, White has something else in mind . . . This becomes clear within a couple of moves" (Kasparov).

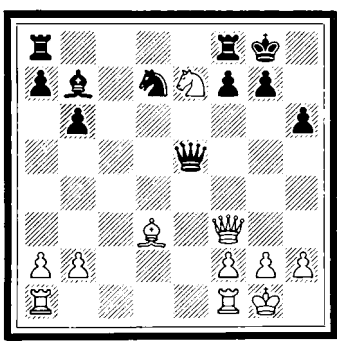
26 . . . bxc4
27 Nc3 Qc6!!

White was reckoning on 27 . . . Qb7+ 28 Ka1 Qa6+ 29 Na2 Rd3 30 Rxh7!! Kxh7 31 Qf7, when against mate by the rook at h1 there is no defence. If instead 30 . . . Rxe3, then 31 Rxg7+ Kxg7 32 Qe7+ Kg8 33 Nh5! gxh5 34 Qg5+ and 35 Qxe3.

But after the move in the game White inevitably loses his queen (both *28 . . . Rd2+* and *28 . . . Rb7+* are threatened), when Black's chances are no worse. Therefore the players agreed to a draw.

It also happens, albeit more rarely, that active defence can

be carried out without sacrificing. In such instances the theme is usually the pursuit of the opponent's most dangerous piece, with the mission of proceeding via complications to exchanges and the desired simplification.



In the 3rd game of the **Kasparov - Belyavsky** Candidates Match, Moscow, 1983, Black very accurately made a choice between obvious, passive defence, and much more camouflaged, active defence. In the first case after 17 . . . Qxe7 18 Qxb7 Black gets into difficulties due to the pin on the 7th rank. On 18 . . . Qd6 White has the unpleasant 19 Rad1, when 19 . . . Nc5 does not help because of 20 Qxa8. White also stands better in the variation 18 . . . Rfe8 19 Bb5 Nc5 20 Qf3 Red8 21 Rfe1. And the queen cannot be driven off the 7th rank: it turns out that on 18 . . . Rfb8 White had prepared the unexpected 19 Qe4!, when after the essential exchange of queens — mate is threatened — the white bishop ends up at e4 and Black loses the exchange.

Therefore — active measures:

17	**. . .**	**Kh8!**
18	**Qxb7**	**Nc5**
19	**Qf3**	**Nxd3!**

The point. With the disappearance of the bishop, White's advantage also disappears.

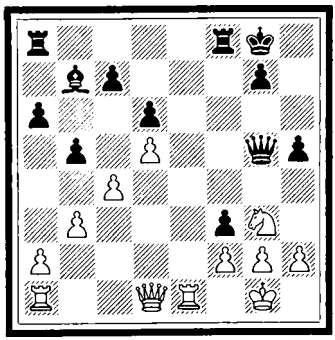
20	**Nc6**	**Qe6**
21	**b3**	

Or 21 Nd4 Qc4.

21	**. . .**	**Ne5**
22	**Nxe5**	**Qxe5**
23	**Rae1**	**Qc7**
24	**Rc1**	**Qe7**

It might seem that by seizing another open file — 25 Rfe1 — White will again take the initiative. But on this there follows 25 . . . Rac8. Therefore — draw agreed.

In the game **Gaprindashvili - Khavsky**, Leningrad, 1977, Black holds the initiative and has created a number of threats on the kingside, the main one being . . . h4. The Women's World Champion of



that time chooses an active form of defence.

21 Qc1! Rf4

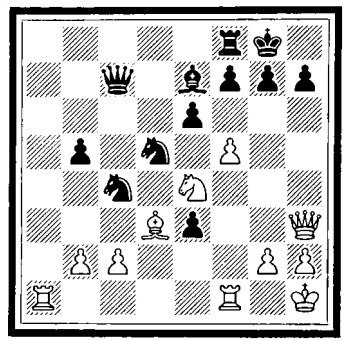
Otherwise the black queen cannot be maintained on the g-file: 21 . . . Qg6 22 Re6!, or 21 . . . Qg4 22 Re4!

22 Re7! Qxe7

It turns out that 22 . . . h4 can be met by 23 Rxc7 Rb8 24 Qe3 hxg3 25 hxg3 Rf5, when both 26 Qxg5 Rxg5 27 gxf3 and 26 Qe6+ Kh7 27 gxf3 are good for White.

23 Qxf4 h4 24 Ne4 Rf8 25 Qe3 fxg2 26 Re1 bxc4 27 bxc4 Bc8 28 Ng5! Qf6 29 h3 Bd7 30 Kxg2 Qg6 31 Kh2, and White even stood a little better; on move 43 the game ended in a draw.

In the game **Klovan - Tukmakov,** Moscow, 1975, Black's position is critical, and he seeks saving chances in complications or . . . simplification.



22 . . . e2!
23 Bxe2

The first achievement: the battery aimed at h7 has been disrupted, since 23 Rfe1 would have allowed 23 . . . Nf4, while after 23 Rf2 Black would have struck with 23 . . . Qa5!

23 . . . Nce3
24 fxe6

White agrees to simplification, since 24 Rfc1 exf5 seemed insufficient to him: for the exchange Black has a pawn and active minor pieces.

24 . . . Nxf1
25 Rxf1 f5

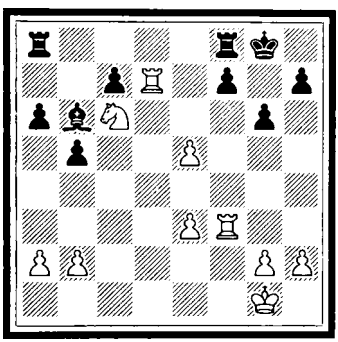
The immediate 25 . . . Qxc2 does not work — 26 Bd3 Qxb2 27 Nc3! Nf6 28 Nd5.

26 Nc3 Nxc3
27 Qxc3

Practically agreeing to a draw, although even with the queens on — 27 bxc3 Qe5 —

White could hardly hope for anything.

27 . . . Qxc3 28 bxc3 g6 29 Bxb5 Kg7, and White was unable to realize his extra pawns.



In the game **Chiburdanidze - Garcia,** USSR, 1983, the only thing that can save Black is again an active struggle for . . . simplification. With all four rooks on the board it is difficult for him to take care of the f7 pawn, and the knight controls d8. A target for counterplay, or more precisely, a target around which exchanges can take place, is provided by the white pawns on the e-file, which are simultaneously both strong and weak.

25 Kf2 Rae8
26 Ke2

The king 'goes his rounds'. After 26 Rf6 Kg7 Black would have been threatening to take on e5.

26 . . . Re6
27 Rf6

The attack on f7 does not achieve its aim — 27 Nd8? Rxe5 28 Nxf7 Rxe3+! 29 Rxe3 Bxe3, depriving White of the check at h6.

27 . . . Rfe8!

By taking on f6 Black would have condemned himself to defeat. But here he exploits the fact that the f7 pawn is immune *(28 Rdxf7? Rxc6).*

28 Kf3 Rxf6
29 exf6 Rxe3+
30 Kf4 Re8
31 Ne5 Be3+!

Again active defence: the timid 31 . . . Rf8? would not have saved the game on account of 32 Ng4.

32 Kxe3 Rxe5+
33 Kd4 Re8
34 g4 h6
35 h4 g5

The black king escapes *(36 h5? Re6)* and equilibrium is achieved.

36 hxg5 hxg5
37 Rd5 Re6
38 Rxg5+

The subsequent mistakes by both sides have no association with the clearly sustained course of active defence. We should add that the correct

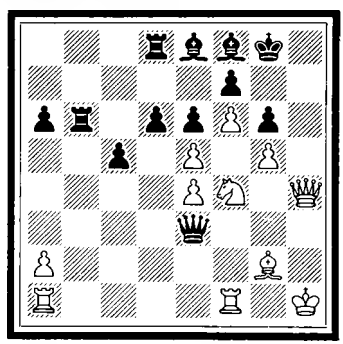
38 . . . Kf8 or even 38 . . . Kh8 (in time trouble Black 'walked' into a check — *38 . . . Kh7?)* would have led to an easy draw — 39 Rf5 Re2 40 Kc3 Re3+ 41 Kd2 Rg3.

Elimination of Attacking Potential

When one side is attacking, it is as though the most active pieces absorb additional power, borrowing it from their 'fellow team members'. And if even only a part of this fighting power can be removed from the board, it means that the potential of the attack will be sharply reduced. This aim, as we have already seen, can be pursued by exchanges and simplification, but — alas — they are not always possible. Often the only way of parrying an onslaught is by sacrificing, to neutralize the opponent's attacking forces, by getting rid of his most dangerous and aggressive pieces. In this case there is no sharp disruption of the material balance, but the customary ratio of forces is changed, and minor pieces begin battling against a queen or rooks. At the same time the kinetic energy of the eliminated pieces is as though transferred to the other side.

This procedure most often involves a counterblow by the queen, and is frequently overlooked by even great players.

A classic example is provided by the well known game **Capablanca v Ilyin-Genevsky,** Moscow, 1925.



30 . . . dxe5

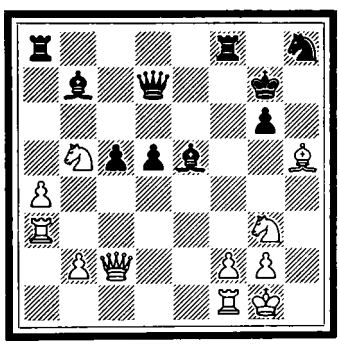
Intending by a queen sacrifice to eliminate White's main attacking forces. If the World Champion of that time had divined his opponent's idea, he would probably have found the relatively simple 31 Nxg6! fxg6 32 Rf3 Qe2 33 Raf1, which after 33 . . . Rd1 34 f7+ Bxf7 35 Rxf7 Rxf1+ 36 Bxf1! Qh5 37 Qxh5 gxh5 38 g6 would have forced Black to settle for a draw.

But in the game White played **31 Rf3?** immediately, which allowed Black to carry out his idea in full.

31 . . . exf4 32 Rxe3 fxe3 33

Qe1 Rb2 34 Qxe3 Rdd2 35 Bf3 c4 36 a3 Bd6 37 Qa7 c3 White resigns.

In the game **Lilienthal - Nezhmetdinov,** 21st USSR Championship, Kiev, 1954, Black based his defence on a similar idea.



Assessing this position by traditional criteria is impossible, since it is too irrational. Even so it is most probable that White has a certain advantage, which amounts not to his extra pawn, but rather to his slightly more active pieces. After 25 Re1 all White's forces would have been in play, but instead he sacrificed to begin a combinational attack.

25 Bxg6? Nxg6
26 Nh5+ Kh6
27 Rh3 Qxh3!!

This is what White overlooked!

28 gxh3 Kxh5
29 Qxc5

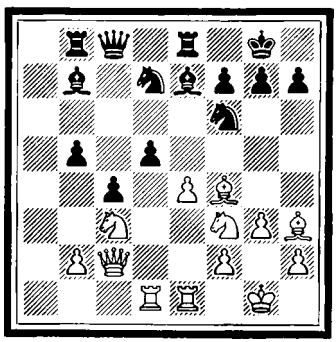
Nominally White still has a material advantage of roughly 'half a pawn', but the position has radically changed. White has nothing with which to attack, his remaining forces are scattered, and it is his opponent who now begins an offensive.

29 . . . Rf3
30 Nd4 Rxh3
31 Ne2 Nf4!
32 Nxf4 Bxf4
33 Kg2 Rc8!

An accurate interposition. After the immediate 33 . . . Rg8+ 34 Kxh3 Bc8+ White, by the counter-sacrifice of his queen 35 Qxc8, would have eliminated Black's attacking forces. Therefore first the queen is driven from its 'observance' of c8, and then after 34 Qe7 (d4, b6) the above mate in two moves follows.

White resigns.

Pirtskhalava - Ufimtsev, Tbilisi, 1946 saw White build up a menacing attacking position, which he could have further strengthened by 17 Ne5! However, the continuation in the game also seems very promising.



17 e5

Hoping for the natural 17 . . . Nh5 18 Nxd5 Bc6 19 e6, but . . .

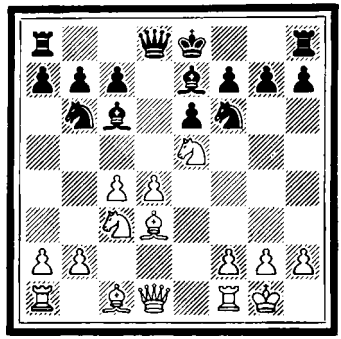
17 . . . Nxe5!!

Exhausting the opponent's forces in the event of 18 Bxc8 Nxf3+ 19 Kf1 Nxe1 20 Rxe1 Rbxc8, after which the armada of black pawns in the centre will sooner or later have its say. White tries to maintain his attack in a different way, but without success.

18 Rxe5 Qxh3
19 Ng5 Qg4
20 h3 Qc8
21 Nxd5

21 Rde1 was somewhat better, but here too Black has a defence — 21 . . . Qd7. But now the onslaught is parried with losses for the attacking side.

21 . . . Bxd5 22 Rdxd5 h6! 23 Nxf7 Kxf7 24 Rxb5 Rxb5 25 Qxc4+ Rd5 White resigns.



Black's position in the game **Gurieli - Matveyeva,** Zheleznovodsk, 1985, looks very difficult. The c6 bishop cannot be preserved from exchange, and the prospect seems to be one of passive defence without any targets for counterplay. But perhaps the queen can be sacrificed?!

10 . . . Qxd4!!
11 Nxf7 Kxf7
12 Bg6+ hxg6
13 Qxd4 Rad8!
14 Qe3

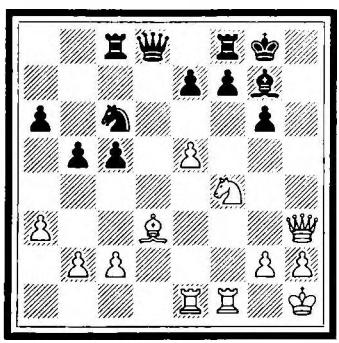
The only move; on 14 Qf4 Black has the highly unpleasant 14 . . . Bd6.

14 . . . Rxh2!

Now the attempt by White to retain the queen would have led to great difficulties: 15 f3? Rh5! 16 Rf2 (there is nothing else) 16 . . . Bc5 17 Qf4 *(17 Qe2* is decisively met by *17 . . . Rdh8*, whereas here this is parried by running with the king — *18 Kf1)* 17 . . . e5

18 Qg3 Nxc4 19 b3 Nd6 20 Bg5 Nf5 21 Qxe5, when 21 . . . Bxf2+ is good, as is 21 . . . Bd4 or 21 . . . Bd6.

But the game continuation also led to an inferior position: **15 Kxh2 Ng4+ 16 Kg1 Nxe3 17 Bxe3 Nxc4 18 Bf4 e5 19 Bg3 Nxb2 20 Bxe5 Rd7 21 Nd1 Nc4 22 Bf4 Bf6** etc.



In the game **Sznapik - Malmgren,** Poland v Sweden, Lund, 1972, all the white pieces are aimed at the black king. The natural and correct defensive reaction would have been to weaken as much as possible the opponent's attacking potential: after all, Black is unable to shield his g6 point against the coming sacrifice.

Therefore the only defensive resource, but also a sufficient one, is 23 . . . Nxe5!, for a moment supporting the g6 pawn and threatening to exchange the white bishop. True, after 24 Rxe5!? (there is essentially nothing else) 24 . . . Bxe5 White can make the planned sacrifice, but . . . The disappearance of his rook has weakened his back rank, and the second rook cannot now leave it.

For example, 25 Nxg6 fxg6 26 Qe6+ Kh8! 27 Qxe5+ Rf6, and if 28 Bxg6, then 28 . . . Qd5 is the simplest. Or 25 Bxg6 fxg6 26 Qe6+ Kg7 27 Qxg6+ Kh8 28 Qh6+ Kg8 29 Qe6+ Kh7!, and 30 Rf3 is not possible.

But in the game Black himself 'urged' the sacrifice on g6.

23 . . .	**c4?**
24 Bxg6	**fxg6**
25 Qe6+	**Kh7**
26 Qxg6+	**Kh8**
27 Ne6	

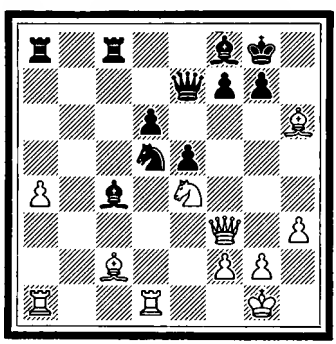
To crown Black's misfortunes, his bishop at g7, which has not managed to move away, is attacked, whereas in the above variations it was *defending* this square beside its king.

27 . . . Rxf1+ 28 Rxf1 Qg8 29 Rf3 Qh7 30 Rh3 Qxh3 31 Qxg7 mate.

In the game **Kr.Georgiev - Van der Sterren,** European

Team Championship, Plovdiv, 1983, with his last move White captured a pawn on h6, weakening the black king's position and assuming his dark-square bishop to be immune.

Was he right?

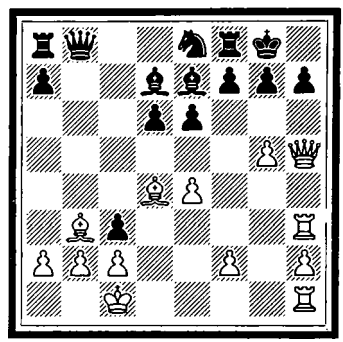


29	. . .	**gxh6!**
30	**Rxd5**	**Bxd5**
31	**Nf6+**	**Qxf6!**

This is the basis of Black's defence. While retaining a material advantage, he has practically exhausted White's forces and he easily parries the latter's final attempts to play actively.

32	**Qxf6**	**Rxc2**
33	**Ra3**	**Be6!**

The f5 square is controlled, and now White does not even have a perpetual check. The remainder was not difficult: **34 a5 Kh7 35 a6 Rc1+ 36 Kh2 d5 37 Rg3 e4** White resigns.



After sacrificing a knight, White intends to give mate in the game **Espig - Kirov,** Timisoara, 1972, and Black has only one way of beating off the attack.

16	. . .	**Bxg5+!**
17	**Qxg5**	**e5**
18	**Rg3!**	**exd4**
19	**Rhg1!**	**Qb5!**

The queen hurries to the help of its king, and simultaneously Black tries to tempt his opponent into playing 20 Qe7 with the threat of 21 Rg5, and when the queen leaves the 5th rank — 22 Rxg7+ Nxg7 23 Qf6. But in this case, by returning the piece — 20 . . . Qe5! 21 Qxd7 Qxe4, Black would have centralized his queen and had every chance of winning.

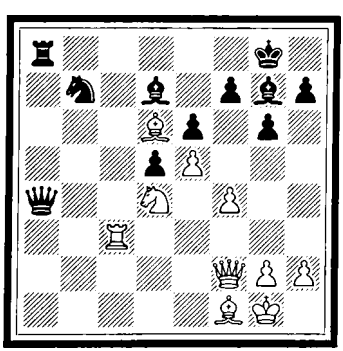
20	**Qh6**	**Qe5**
21	**f4!**	**Kh8!**

Naturally, 21 . . . Qf6? loses to 22 Rxg7+. But now, while

offering the exchange, of queens, in passing Black sets a very cunning trap: 22 Bxf7?! Qb5!! (bad is *22 . . . Rxf7 23 fxe5 gxh6 24 Rg8* mate, or *22 . . . Qf6 23 Rxg7! Qxg7 24 Rxg7 Nxg7 25 Bg6*, mating) 23 Bb3 Qxb3!, and in the event of 24 Rxg7 Black is the first to give mate.

22	**Rxg7!**	**Qxg7**
23	**Rxg7**	**Nxg7**
24	**Qxd6**	**Be6**
25	**Qxd4**	**cxb2+**
26	**Kxb2**	

For all the unusual balance of forces, after the best move 29 . . . f6! the chances would have been roughly equal. Black has resourcefully and accurately eliminated White's attacking forces.



After sacrificing a pawn and gaining compensation for it, in the game **Razborov - A. Vasyukov**, Liepaja, 1975, White played **29 Ra3,** a move planned long in advance, intending after 29 . . . Qxa3 30 Bxa3 Rxa3 31 Qb2 to win a piece and the game. But Black found a way of eliminating the opponent's most active pieces and of seizing the initiative.

29	**. . .**	**Nxd6!**
30	**Rxa4**	**Rxa4**
31	**Qb2**	**Ne4**

The approximate material equality and the domination of Black's pieces give him very real winning chances.

32 Nf3 Bf8

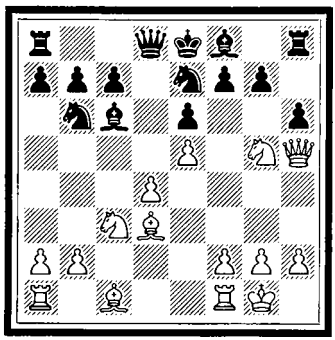
This forces White to create an escape square and lose a tempo, as a result of which he can no longer drive away the centralized black knight.

33 h4?

After this the game cannot be saved: the dark squares around his king are like a gaping wound. The only way to continue resisting was by 33 g3.

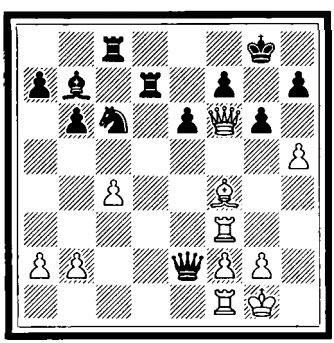
33 . . . Bc5+ 34 Kh2 Bf2 35 Qb7 Ra1 36 Qxd7 Rxf1 37 Ng5 Bg3+ 38 Kh3 Rh1+ 39 Kg4 Rxh4+ 40 Kf3 Rxf4+ 41 Ke3 Nxg5. White resigns: 42 Qd8+ Kg7 43 Qxg5 Re4+ and 44 . . . Bxe5.

What would you have played?



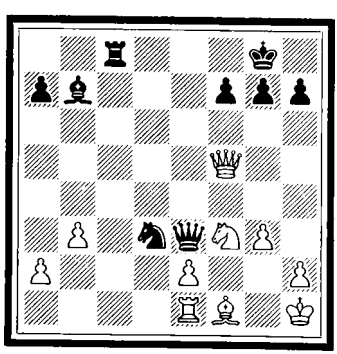
No. 10

The direct threat of mate at f7 can be parried in two ways. Which one should Black choose?



No. 11

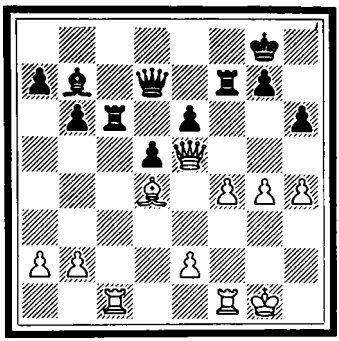
Despite being a piece down, White has built up a strong attack. He threatens both 28 h6, and 28 hxg6 fxg6 *(28 . . . hxg6 29 Rh3)* 29 Bh6 with mate on the 8th or 7th rank. True, it is Black to move . . .



No. 12

Black's attack looks threatening. 37 Qxd3 fails to 37 . . . Bxf3+ 38 Bg2 Qf2! with an immediate win, while after 37 Rb1 Nf2+ 38 Kg2 Ne4 39 Qf4 Qf2+ it is very difficult for White to escape from the pin.

Does he have a way of saving the game?

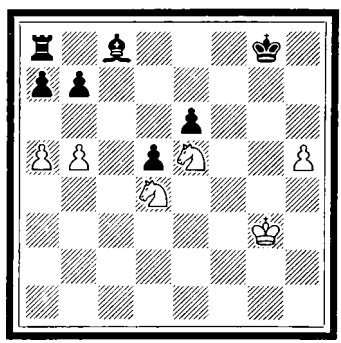


No. 13

White has a formidable 'queen + bishop' battery, plus a kingside pawn storm. True, Black can force the exchange of queens bv **31 ... Qc7,** since in view of the variation 32 Qe3? Rxc1 33 Rxc1 Qxf4 White cannot avoid it . . .

5
Blockade

This concept hovered over the chess board for many years, until Aron Nimzowitsch, one of the most outstanding theorists of all time, formulated it, transformed it into a very important strategic procedure, and gave some excellent examples of its application. In the words of Ex-World Champion Mikhail Tal, Nimzowitsch was the first to define it, and he was the first to show how much the strength of a piece can grow when it stands on a blockading square, and how such a piece can compensate for a material deficit. Nimzowitsch asserted that a blockade can cause paralysis of the enemy position or of a whole complex of enemy pieces, and he gave the following impressive situation.

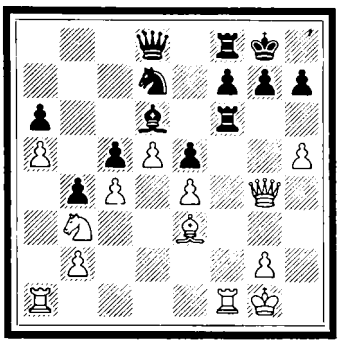


Indeed, although the exchange and a pawn up, Black has chances only of . . . losing. And not because he is faced with irresistible threats, but due to the ideal blockade of his centre,and as a consequence, of his queenside.

Of course, in practice such a completely paralyzing blockade is rare, but in the games of even the strongest grandmasters and of World Champions, blockade is a procedure of considerable importance.

In modern-day chess some classic examples of blockade have been frequently demonstrated by ex-World Champion Tigran Petrosian, who considered himself a follower of Nimzowitsch's ideas.

In the following example, from **Tal - Petrosian,** 25th USSR Championship, Riga, 1958, White's positional



advantage is determined by several factors. He has a protected passed pawn in the centre, the queenside, where the opponent might initiate counterplay, is blocked, and the black minor pieces are tied to the defence of the c5 pawn. But the main thing is that White is preparing an attack on the enemy king. Therefore 31 . . . Kh8 suggests itself, in order to eliminate the very real threat of 31 Bg5 Rxf1+ 32 Rxf1 Qc7 *(32 . . . f6 33 Qe6+)* 33 Bh6, winning the exchange, but . . .

31 . . . Rf4!

Not only giving up material, but also apparently falling in with White's plans.

32 Bxf4

By accepting the sacrifice, White loses his advantage. Black's pieces obtain blockading squares and become very active. White should have declined Black's 'out of the blue' offer of the exchange, and limited himself to the more modest 32 Rxf4 exf4 33 Bxf4, with the possible sequel 33 . . . Ne5 34 Qg3 Nxc4 35 e5 or 33 . . . Qf6 34 Bxd6 Qxd6 35 Rf1.

23 . . . exf4 33 Nd2 Ne5 34 Qxf4 Nxc4 35 e5 Nxe5 36 Ne4 h6 37 Rae1?

White fails to sense that Black is all ready to launch a counterattack, and that the d6 bishop will shortly be worth more than a white rook. It was not yet too late to maintain the balance, by rejecting any ideas of a kingside offensive and choosing the simplifying 37 Nxd6 Qxd6 38 Rfe1 f6 39 Rad1. Now, however, Black creates numerous threats.

37 . . . Bb8
38 Rd1

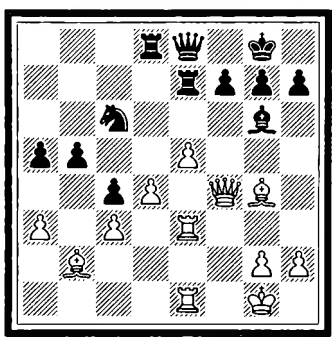
A belated admission of his mistake: 38 . . . Nd3 was threatened.

38 . . . c4
39 d6 Nd3
40 Qg4 Ba7+
41 Kh1

After sealing this move, it was only with his opponent's help that White managed to parry the counterattack, the material advantage soon being on Black's side:

41 . . . f5 42 Nf6+ Kh8 43 Qxc4 Nxb2 44 Qxa6 Nxd1 45 Qxa7 Qxd6 46 Qd7 Qxf6 47 Qxd1 Rb8 etc.

Reshevsky-Petrosian
Candidates Tournament,
Zurich, 1953



White's mobile pawn centre, the possibility of an attack on the king (by h2-h4-h5 and Rg3, for example), as well as the two potentially powerful bishops (if Black should continue to seek counterplay by the planned . . . b4) cause clear preference to be given to White's position. But it transpires that Black has in reserve a plan involving an exchange sacrifice, based on a purely defensive procedure — blockade.

25 . . . Re6!!

This is the idea! By vacating for his knight the e7 square, and hence a path to d5, Black obtains good play. His possibilities are also improved by the fact that, without a white opponent, the black bishop sharply gains in strength.

26 a4

White still hopes to provoke 26 . . . b4, in order to reply 27 d5 Rxd5 28 Bxe6 fxe6 29 Qxc4, but petrosian sticks to his plan.

26 . . . Ne7
27 Bxe6 fxe6
28 Qf1

White keeps a watch on the c4 pawn and prudently prepares to return the exchange for a pawn. On 28 Qf2 Black would have had the unpleasant 28 . . . Nd5 29 Rf3 b4, when his initiative could have become very dangerous.

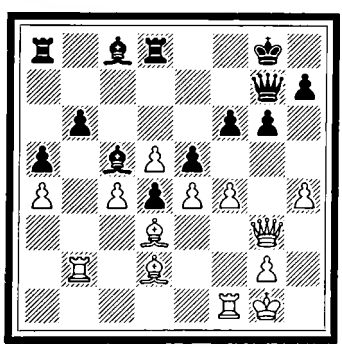
28 . . . Nd5
29 Rf3 Bd3
30 Rxd3! cxd3
31 Qxd3 b4

The knight is so much stronger than the bishop that White's extra pawn is not noticed at all. Since the attempt to drive away the knight — 32 c4 Nb6 33 Rc1 Nxa4 34 Ba1 Qc6 or 33 d5 exd5 34 c5 Nxa4 35 Bd4 Rc8 36 Qf3 Qe6 — would have led to the white pawns being blockaded, and Black's being a powerful force, Reshevsky chose:

32 cxb4 axb4 33 a5 Ra8 34 Ra1 Qc6 35 Bc1 Qc7 36 a6 Qb6 37 Bd2 b3 38 Qc4 h6 39 h3 b2 40 Rb1 Kh8 41 Be1

In this position (after adjournment analysis) a draw was agreed. Despite being a pawn down, Black has a slight positional advantage, but it is hardly possible to realize it.

But it only required **Petrosian** to underestimate the attacking potential of **Kasparov** (White) at the 'Tournament of Stars', Moscow, 1981, and to neglect the defensive procedure of blockade, for him to find himself on the verge of defeat.



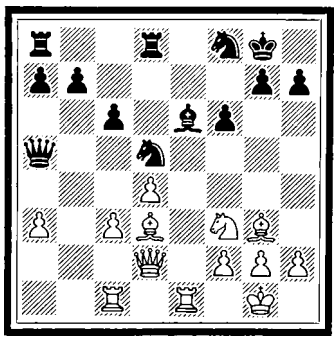
For the time being the position on the queenside and in the centre is stabilized. The weaknesses at a4 and b6 are defended or can be defended, and neither the white, nor the black passed pawn on the d-file can take a step forward. But on the kingside the white f- and h-pawns are perfectly capable of shattering the opponent's defensive lines, and before beginning counterplay it is high time for Black to think about neutralizing the white initiative.

This task would have been best met by the typical device 29 . . . h6!, in order to answer 30 h5 with 30 . . . g5! 31 fxg5 fxg5, when after 31 Kh1 Rf8 33 Be2 (with the idea of exchanging the light-square bishops and invading at f5 with his rook) there is the possibility of the exchange sacrifice 33 . . . Rf4!, completely blocking the kingside too.

Instead of this Black chose **29 . . . Bd7 30 h5 Bxa4 31 h6! Qc7 32 f5** (32 fxe5 fxe5 33 Bg5 Re8 34 Bf6 Rac8 35 Rf5 Bd6 36 c5! bxc5 37 Bc4! also came into consideration, when Black has no defence against the threat of 38 Rxe5 Rxe5 39 Bxe5 Bxe5 40 d6+! and 41 Qxe5) **32 . . . g5 33 Bxg5 fxg5 34 Qxg5+ Kf8,** and now, by continuing 35 f6! with the threat of 36 f7, White could have won.

It was blockade that could have eased Black's defence

in the 3rd game of the **Kasparov - Smyslov** Candidates Match, Vilnius, 1984.

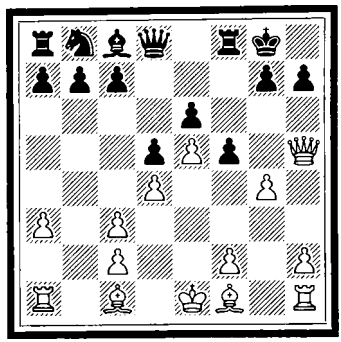


The white pieces are ideally placed, it looks foolhardy to accept the pawn sacrifice *(17 . . . Qxa3 18 c4)*, and so Black arranges his pieces more 'compactly'.

17 . . . Bf7

In the middlegame after 18 Qb2 this move would have justified itself, but . . . A convenient moment for the blockading 17 . . . Nb6!? is missed, after which White no longer allows the mobility of his pawn centre to be reduced. Especially as in the endgame his long-range bishops will give him excellent prospects.

18 c4! Qxd2 19 Nxd2 Nb6 20 Nb3, and in the end Black was unable to parry the activity of the opponent's pieces and pawns in this seemingly simple position.



After his original handling of the opening, White has good prospects of a kingside attack in the game **Martin - Dolmatov,** Barcelona, 1983. True, White's last aggressive move (10 g4) breaks up his pawn phalanx, of which Black takes subtle advantage.

10 . . . Bd7!

Preparing by an exchange sacrifice to block the opponent's play on the kingside. Incidentally, this solution is the strongest, since after 10 . . . b6, with the idea of exchanging bishops, White gains a clear advantage — 11 Bg5! Qe8 (bad is *11 . . . Qd7 12 gxf5 Rxf5 13 Bd3*) 12 Qxe8 Rxe8 13 gxf5 exf5 14 Bg2, with the constant threat of c3-c4.

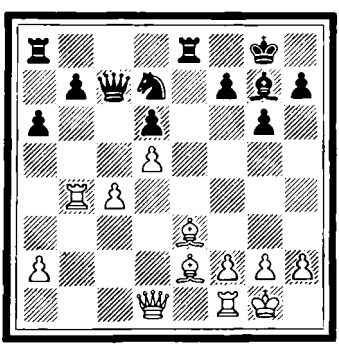
11 gxf5 Rxf5 12 Qh3 Be8 13 Bd3 Bg6! 14 Rg1 Qf8 15 Bxf5 Bxf5 16 Qf3

The pretty trap 16 Qh4

Kh8? 17 Rxg7!! Qxg7 18 Bh6! is parried by the simple 16 . . . Nc6 17 Bh6 Bg6.

16 . . . Nc6 17 Qe2 Kh8 18 a4 Qf7 19 a5 b6 20 axb6 cxb6 21 Rg3 Na5 22 f3 Nc4

A blockade of White's entire pawn structure! The black pieces dominate, and gradually Dolmatov managed to gain a decisive advantage.



In the game **Polugayevsky - Petrosian,** 50th USSR Championship, Moscow, 1983, White is excellently placed: his two bishops and pressure on the b-file promise a great deal. But his pawn structure lends itself to a blockade and . . .

19 . . . Rxe3!
20 fxe3 Nc5

In one go both the bishops and the pressure have been done away with. The queenside is blockaded and defended by the knight, and now it is only White who will have trouble with his e3 pawn and his kingside.

21 Qc2 Re8
22 Rf3 Bh6
23 Qc3

Preparing the defence of the e3 pawn by tactical means, as well as . . . a fatal mistake. 23 Rb1 was more correct, immediately giving up the pawn, but switching the rook to the e- or f-file.

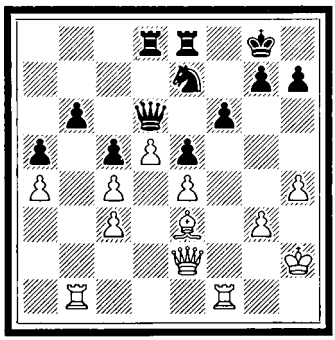
23 . . . Qe7
24 Rb6??

With the idea after 24 . . . Bxe3+ 25 Rxe3 Qxe3+ 26 Qxe3 Rxe3 27 Bf3 of picking up the d6 pawn and lifting the blockade of his pawn centre. Alas . . .

24 . . . Na4

White resigns, since he emerges a rook down.

A separate section of the extensive theme 'blockade' is the struggle against a protected passed pawn. If it can be immobilized and securely blockaded, this positional advantage of the opponent can be largely neutralized. And by its very nature the ideal blockader is the knight — it can support attacks on the passed pawn's defenders and itself attack them.



In the game **Denker - Smyslov** from the USA-USSR Match, 1946, it was with this aim that Black replaced one blockading piece (a less appropriate one — the queen) with another.

28 . . .	**Nc8!**
29 h5	**Rf8**
30 Rf2	**Rf7**
31 h6?	

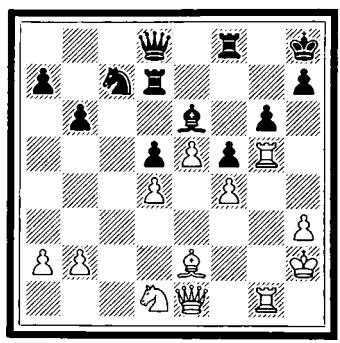
This merely facilitates Black's later . . . f5. But White is still thinking of activity.

31 . . .	**g6**
32 Rbf1	**Qe7**
33 Qg4	**Nd6!**

The regrouping is completed, and the position has become strategically won. White's desperate attempts to confuse matters can no longer save the game.

34 Qe6 Nxe4 35 Qxb6 f5! 36 Rb2 f4! 37 Qe6 fxe3 38 Rxf7 Qxf7 39 Qxe5 Nf6, and shortly White resigned.

A successfully implemented blockade enables the defending side to quickly activate his forces. Thus situations where, with the support of a knight blockading a protected enemy passed pawn, flank operations are carried out, have long become textbook examples.



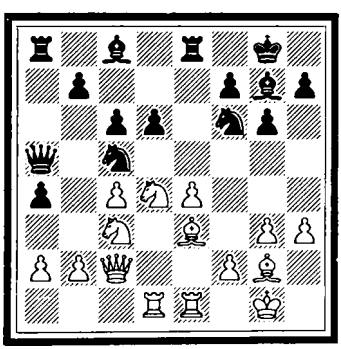
At first sight White has a positional advantage in the game **Karasev - Faibisovich,** Leningrad, 1977. But — blockade!

31 . . . Bf7! 32 R5g3 Ne6 33 Qd2 Qh4 34 Rf1 g5! 35 fxg5 Qxd4 36 Qxd4 Nxd4 37 Bd3 Bg6

The picture has changed: Black's pieces have acquired mobility, and his pawns (in contrast to the white passed pawn) are ready to advance. And all these achievements are based on a well organized blockade.

38 Re3 f4 39 Bxg6 fxe3! 40 Rxf8+ Kg7 41 Nxe3 Kxf8, and Black realized his advantage.

And to conclude this section we should like to remind the reader of a common practical mistake, which can be called self-blockading. The incautious advance of even a single pawn can sometimes lead to the immobilizing of an entire pawn chain, or of an entire sector of one's own position, and one should beware of such mistakes, although, of course, no one is insured against them.



For the moment there is no question of a serious advantage for either side: the game **Botvinnik - Geller,** Budapest, 1952, has just come out of the opening. Nevertheless, there is naturally a slight strategic initiative on White's side. When suddenly . . .

15 a3?

"Self-blocking" was what Geller later called this move. Indeed, after it the knight at c5 feels very much at home, and the b3 square is hopelessly weakened. 15 Bf4 would have left White with the better game, as would 15 Re2 Nfd7 16 Red2 with pressure on the d6 pawn.

15 . . .	**Nfd7**
16 Bf1	**Re7**

White has made all the useful moves with his pieces, and he must begin determined action. Alas, in this case too the 'self-blockade' of the queenside makes itself felt.

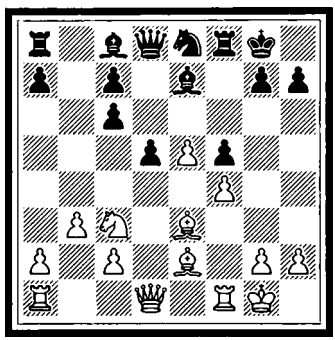
17 f4	**Nf6**
18 Bf2	**Bd7**
19 e5	

Practically forced in view of the threatened 19 . . . Rae8.

19 . . . dxe5 20 fxe5 Ne8 21 Nf3 Bf5 22 Qe2 h5 23 Bd4 Nc7 24 Qf2 N7e6 25 Be3 Rae8

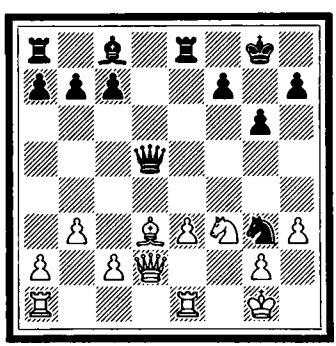
Here we can sum up: Black has an obvious advantage, and he went on to win.

What would you have played?



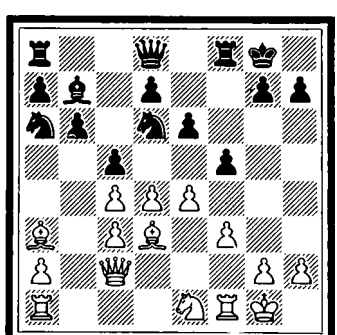
No. 14

A move earlier Black impeded the opponent's pawn chain by ... f5. Does this mean that the blockade has been implemented? Or are some further measures required?



No. 15

The isolated e-pawn is no adornment to White's position. Perhaps there is some sense in Black blockading it, by establishing a piece at e4? If so, then is 19 ... Ne4 an appropriate way of doing it?



No. 16

This is a position typical of the Nimzo-Indian Defence and certain other openings. White's strength lies in his mobile pawn centre and two bishops. But where should Black seek his chances?

6
The versatile king

Win a pawn somewhere around move 30, and by move 60 realize your advantage . . . Tedious, yes? Is it not simpler to announce checkmate to His Majesty, i.e. to carry out the basic aim of any chess game, between players of any standard — from beginners to grandmasters? It may not be simpler but, you will agree, it is much more pleasant. This is why for a long time chess battles followed a pattern which was accurately depicted by one of the greatest chess thinkers, the second World Champion in history, Doctor of Mathematics and Doctor of Philosophy Emanuel Lasker: "To place one's king in safety, to prepare an attack by slow degrees, to decline a proferred sacrifice were tactics not well understood and even less esteemed. The play was wholly dominated by the feverish desire to make a rush against the hostile king and to this end furiously to assail the obstructions, regardless of the sacrifices required".

And it must be admitted that kings proved powerless in the face of such onslaughts. Evidence is provided by, among others, the famous 'immortal' and 'evergreen' games of Adolf Anderssen, which we have admired for almost a century and a half, but in which — alas! — in our time adequate defences against the attacks have been found.

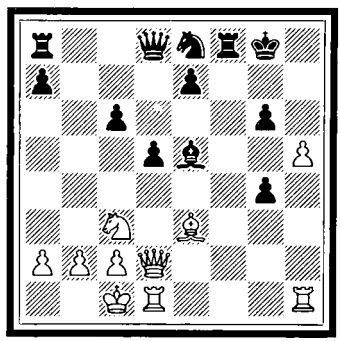
"The king is doomed!" — it was under this slogan that chess maestros waged war, until it was questioned by the first World Champion Wilhelm Steinitz. In his theory of positional play, which in time became the basis of chess strategy, he asserted, in particular, that in defence a king is not only a sickly, pampered object of constant concern, but also an active fighting unit. In the highly popular King's Gambit he even proposed the "Steinitz Variation or Gambit" — 1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 Nc3?! Qh4+ 4 Ke2, with the idea of gaining a tempo by Nf3. And the king . . . Even without castling it

will find itself a place and will be able to participate, alongside the other pieces, in its own defence.

The defence of the king in modern-day chess is provided in the first instance by a pawn screen, supported by pieces. There is probably no need to repeat the rudiments of chess theory about the strongest screening pawn formation — all on the same rank, or about the minuses (along with the plusses) entailed by advancing the h-, g- or f-pawn in the event of kingside castling. This may allow the attacking side to break up the pawns by a 'bayonet' pawn thrust, or — as happens much more often — by the sacrifice of a piece. And then it becomes uncomfortable for the exposed king, but . . . There is still one possible way of defending the king — in the absence of his own pawn screen the player can try to hide it . . . behind an enemy pawn which has broken through.

"Sitting" . . .

Back in the period of chess romance it was on this device that a variation of the King's Gambit was based (true, for the sake of an attack) — 1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 Nf3 Be7 4 Bc4 Bh4+ 5 g3 fxg3 6 O—O gxh2+ 7 Kh1, but, of course, modern-day examples are more convincing.



This position from the **Smyslov - Botvinnik** World Championship Return Match, Moscow, 1958, is interpreted by Professor Mikhail Botvinnik as follows:

"At any cost Black must keep the white pawn at h5, since it will soon be the only pawn screen . . . for the black king!"

Hence —

18 . . . g5!

Black loses time, gives back both of his extra pawns, and . . . in this way secures the safety of his king.

19 Bxg5 Qd6
20 Rh4 Nf6
21 Bxf6 Qxf6
22 Rxg4+ Kh8

Oh, what could White not give for the h5 pawn not to be

there, or for it . . . to become a black one. But as it is the king is unapproachable, and it is time for White to think about his own monarch.

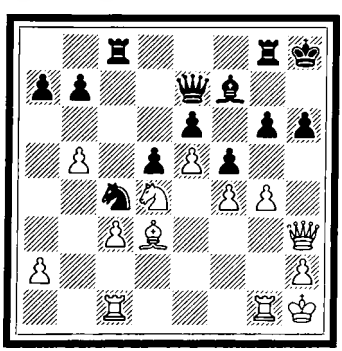
23 Kb1 Rg8
24 Rb4!

To the defence!

24 . . . a5
25 Rb6 Bxc3
26 bxc3 Rab8
27 Rxb8 Rxb8+
28 Ka1

The attacking forces of both sides have been exhausted, and the game ended in a draw.

It was the underestimation of this defensive device which caused White's downfall in the game **Kayev - Chistyakov,** Kiev, 1938.



Since 25 . . . Kg7 and 25 . . . Kh7 both lose *(26 gxf5 gxf5 27 Nxf5 exf5 28 Bxf5+ Bg6 29 Bxg6+ Rxg6 30 Qxc8),* Black resorted to the only possibility **25 . . . h5.** Now the correct 26 gxf5! exf5 *(26 . . . gxf5? 27 Nxf5! exf5 28 Qxf5* would have led to capitulation) would have retained for White a serious positional advantage, although the immediate 27 Nxf5 also does not work because of 27 . . . Qd7. But White decided to deny his opponent this possibility, and with the idea of carrying out the sacrifice on f5 he chose **26 gxh5?**

Black's reply came as a surprise.

26 . . . g5!

The white pawn at h5 is retained as a shield for the black king, whereas the e5 pawn may become weak, for example, in variations such as 27 fxg5 Rxg5 28 Rxg5 Qxg5 29 Rg1 Qxh5 30 Qxh5 Bxh5, when White does not have time to take on e6. Dismayed by the change of circumstances, he chooses a weaker continuation.

27 Rce1? g4
28 Qg3?

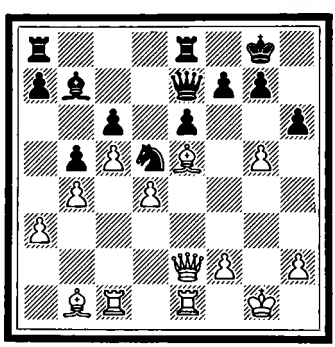
And here 29 Qg2 would have been better, for the moment restricting the black knight.

28 . . . Nd2

The threats of capturing on

c3 and transferring the knight to e4 are pretty unpleasant. Now White should have gone totally onto the defensive, for example by 29 Bb1 Ne4 30 Bxe4 dxe4 31 Re3, since the attempt to again seize the initiative does not succeed.

29 Bxf5 exf5 30 Nxf5 Qe6 31 Nd6 Ne4 32 Rxe4 dxe4 33 f5 Qd5 34 e6 e3+ 35 Rg2 Bxe6 36 fxe6 Rxc3, and within a few moves White resigned.



In a radio game between the crews of the ships **Cosmonaut Yury Gagarin** and **Nikolai Semashko,** 1982, with his last move *(28 g5)* White has immediately rammed his opponent's defences, although the preparation of f2-f4-f5 (with the interposition of *Qf3*) came into consideration. He clearly underestimated Black's defensive rejoinder.

28 . . . g6!

It goes without saying that after 28 . . . Qxg5+ 29 Kh1 the threats along the g-file would have been decisive. But now Black plans either to play 29 . . . h5, blocking the kingside, or, as occurs in the game, to sit it out with his king behind the enemy pawn.

29 gxh6 Kh7
30 Kh1

Hopes of the h2-h4-h5 are all the same illusory.

30 . . . Bc8

The rooks are disconnected, but the bishop is aiming for . . . f7.

31 Rg1 Rg8
32 Bg7

With the threat of 33 Qh5 and the sacrifice on g6.

32 . . . f5!

At just the right time. The main striker — the bishop at b1 — is restricted, and the weakness of g6 can be defended tactically.

33 Rg3 Bd7
34 Rcg1 Be8
35 Qd2

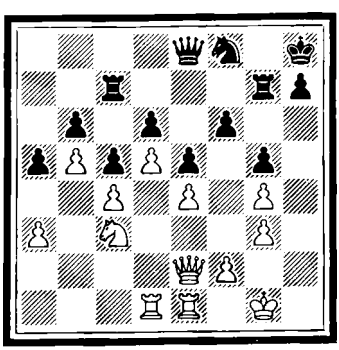
Alas, in chess, in contrast to draughts (chequers), capturing is not obligatory, and the elegant variation 35 Rxg6 Bxg6 36 Rxg6 Kxg6 37 Qg4+ Kh7 *(37 . . . Kf7 38 Qh5* mate*)* 38 Qxf5+! exf5 39 Bxf5 mate is interrupted by the prosaic 36 . . . Nf4.

35 . . . Bf7

The construction of Black's defensive line is complete, the sacrifice on g6 is easily monitored, and after the possible advance . . . a5 at a convenient moment, he will gain counterplay on the queenside. The game soon ended in a draw.

"Running" . . .

Self-defence by the king most often consists of timely running away from the line of fire. Sometimes this is natural, but sometimes it demands courage and accurate calculation.



In the game **Gufeld - Taimanov,** Moscow, 1969, it was a journey by the black king which largely neutralized White's attack on the kingside.

28	**. . .**	**Kg8!**
29	**Kg2**	**Kf7**
30	**Rh1**	**Ke7**
31	**Rh5**	**Kd8**
32	**Rdh1**	**Kc8**

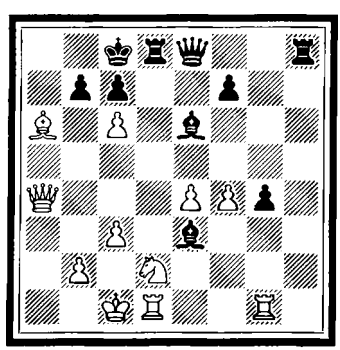
A peculiar demonstration by Black of the safety of his position. The place for the king is at c7, from where it can defend the d6 pawn; therefore the immediate 32 . . . Rcf7 and 33 . . . Kc7 was more accurate.

33	**Nd1**	**Rcf7**
34	**Ne3**	**Rg6**
35	**Nf5**	**Kc7**

White has retained his spatial advantage, but the opponent's king has slipped away and the f2-f4 break has now become double-edged. In the end the game finished in a draw.

In two other instances, the running by the king — also the only means of defence — took place under fire and was based on tactical nuances.

Sazonov - Khariton
Correspondence, 1973



23 . . . Rd6!

Clearing the way for His Majesty, and in passing inviting White . . . to seek salvation in the event of 24 cxb7+ Kb8 25 Bb5 c6!

24 Bxb7+ Kd8
25 f5

The alternative was 25 Rg2, but after 25 . . . Bxf4 Black already has compensation for his minimal material deficit. By the move played White not so much attacks the bishop, as prepares to close the mating net around the black king by 26 f6.

25 . . . Bb3!

The diverting of the queen gains an important tempo.

26 Qxb3 Bxg1
27 Rxg1 Rh2

The resulting position cannot be assessed by normal criteria: on what scales can one weigh up differences in the activity of the pieces with material unbalanced, or in the safety of the kings? . . . Nevertheless the initiative is probably still with White.

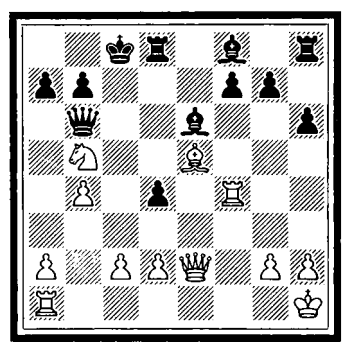
28 Ba6!?

After 28 Rd1 Qe5! (preventing *29 f6*) 29 Qxf7 g3 Black's counterplay becomes threatening, since on 30 f6 Qxf6 31 Qxf6+ Rxf6 32 Nf3+ he has 32 . . . Rd6.

28 . . . Rdxd2
29 Qb8+ Ke7
30 Qxc7+ Kf6!

The last precise 'step' by the king. The plausible 30 . . . Kf8 would have led to a spectacular loss — 31 Qxh2! Rxh2 32 c7 Qxe4 33 c8=Q+ Kg7 34 Rxg4+! Qxg4 35 f6+.

31 Rxg4 Qe5 32 Qxe5+ Kxe5 33 c7 Rc2+ Draw agreed.



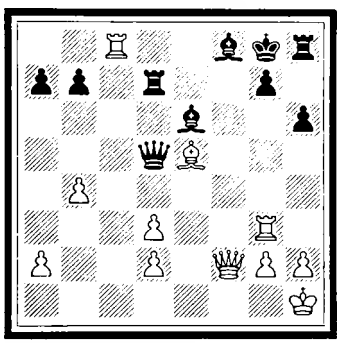
With his last move (16 Nc3-b5) White has offered a piece sacrifice in the game **Planinc–Tukmakov,** Vrnjacka Banja, 1965, and Black accepts it, pinning his hopes on running with his king.

16 . . . d3!
17 cxd3 Qxb5
18 Rc1+ Kd7
19 Rxf7+! Ke8!

Weaker is 19 . . . Bxf7 20 Rc7+ Ke6 *(20 . . . Ke8 21 Bd6+)* 21 Bd4+! Kd6 22 Rxf7 with

numerous threats.

20 Rf3 Qd5
21 Rg3 Kf7!
22 Rc7+ Rd7
23 Qf2+ Kg8
24 Rc8



The assault has reached its peak, and things would seem to be bad for Black. On 24 . . . Rf7 White has the decisive 25 Rxg7+.

24 . . . Kh7!

The king's flight concludes, and the game too.

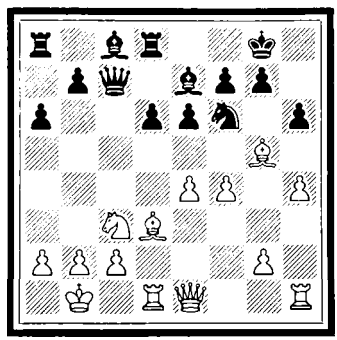
25 d4 Rf7
26 Qxf7 Bxf7
27 Rxf8 Bg6!

White's final hope of 27 . . . Rxf8? 28 Rxg7+ Kh8 29 Rxf7+ is not realized.

28 Rxg6

Or 28 Rxh8+ Kxh8 29 Rxg6 Qe4.

28 . . . Kxg6 29 Rxh8 Qxa2, and Black realized his advantage.



In the game **Lobron - Chiburdanidze,** Dortmund, 1983, with his last move 15 h4 White unequivocally demonstrated his intentions of checkmating the black king, which decided to defend by . . . making a journey to the queenside. An original decision, but a perfectly possible and instructive one.

15 . . . Kf8 16 e5 dxe5 17 fxe5 Nd7 18 Bf4 Nc5 19 Qe3 Ke8 20 Ne4 Nxe4 21 Qxe4 Bd7 22 Qh7 Bf8 23 Bg6!

With the threat of 24 Bxh6.

23 . . . Bb5

After 23 . . . fxg6? 24 Qxg6+ Ke7 25 Rhf1 against the mate *(26 Bg5+* etc.) there is no defence.

24 Rd6!? Rxd6

The only move; 24 . . . Bxd6? 25 exd6 and 26 Qg8+ (or even *26 Qxg7*) is unacceptable.

25 exd6 Qc4
26 Bxh6 Qg4!

This defence stifles White's attack: he has won a pawn, but his forces are tied up on the edge of the board.

27 Bg5 Rc8
28 d7+! Kxd7!

Not 28 . . . Bxd7 29 Bxf7+ Kxf7 30 Rf1+.

29 Bxf7 Bc4
30 Bh5 Qxg2

The pawns, incidentally, have become level . . .

31 Rd1+ Bd5 32 Qd3 Bd6 33 Bg6 Qf3 34 Qd4 Be5! 35 Qd2 Kc7 36 Bd3 Kb8

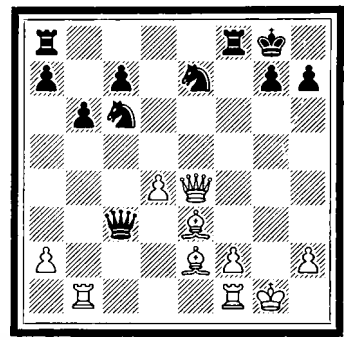
The king, which has wandered across the board from end to end, is now safe, and a series of accurate moves by the other pieces have now given Black perhaps a slight initiative.

37 Rf1 Qg4
38 Be2 Qa4
39 b3 Qa3
40 Qc1 Qb4

It is now White's turn to defend coolly.

41 Bf4!? Qc3 42 Bxe5+ Qxe5 43 Bd3 Rh8 44 Qa3! Qc7 45 Qb4 Ka8 46 a4 a5 47 Qd2 Draw agreed.

In the 11th game of the **Kasparov - Smyslov** Candidates Match, Vilnius, 1984, Black's position is unenviable. He is a pawn up, it is true, but his knights lack support *(19 Rfc1* is already threatened), and the main thing is that after 19 Bd3 a direct attack on his king will commence. And although it looks suicidal to run away with the board full of pieces and the centre open, it was this plan that Black made the basis of his defence.



18 . . . Qa3!
19 Bd3 Qd6!

19 . . . Rf5 20 Qe6+ Rf7 21 Bc4 would have lost the exchange, while after 19 . . . g6 the white bishops would have torn to pieces the position of the black king — 20 Bc4+ Kg7 21 d5 Na5 22 Bd4+ Kg8 23 d6+ Nxc4 24 dxe7, and Black loses a rook.

20 Qxh7+ Kf7
21 Rb5

This looks almost decisive, since the tempting 21 . . . Rh8

does not work — 22 Bc4+ Kf6 23 Bg5 mate. But perhaps White should have preferred 21 Bc4+ Ke8 22 Rfe1 Kd7 23 Qh3+ Nf5 24 Rb5 with a continuing attack.

21 ... Nxd4
22 Qe4

22 Bxd4 Qxd4 23 Rg5 was also very strong, but here Black would have resorted to the planned 23 ... Ke6! 24 Rxg7 Kd6! *(24 ... Qxg7? 25 Qxg7 Rg8 26 Re1+* and *27 Rxe7*, winning a piece) 25 Rxe7 Qg4+ with a draw, or 25 Rg3 Rh8 26 Qe4 Qxe4, when the worst is over.

22 ... Rad8!

22 ... Nxb5 would have lost to 23 Bc4+ Kf6 24 Qh4+ with a decisive attack.

23 Bxd4

The only alternative was 23 Rd1 with a further sharpening of the position.

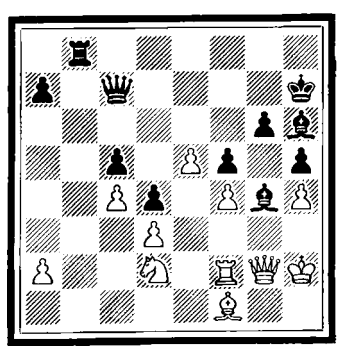
23 ... Qxd4
24 Rf5+ Nxf5
25 Qxf5+ Kg8

The king looks after itself. The attempt to screen it — 25 ... Qf6? would have been a mistake: 26 Bc4+ Ke7 27 Re1+ with an almost 'epaulette' mate.

27 Qh7+ Kf7 Draw agreed.

"Standing" ...

However, a king is capable not only of sitting it out in hiding or of saving itself by running away. More often than we suppose, it can itself take on certain defensive functions. Even if we disregard the controversial exaggerations of Steinitz, there still remain many examples which demonstrate the correctness of his theory regarding the ability of the king to defend itself. Unfortunately, the stereotyped nature of our chess thinking is so strong, that we automatically hide our king instead of giving him a shield to hold. It is only top-class players who have the courage to do this!



In the game **Karpov-Savon,** 41st USSR Championship, Moscow, 1973, White has a stable positional advantage,

determined in particular by his protected passed pawn in the centre. In addition, the opponent's light-square bishop is in an unusual form of imprisonment, and the dark-square bishop is also almost 'encaged'. White has only to wrest control of the open b-file, and moreover the exchange of queens or rooks will also be in his favour.

This can be done only by taking the knight to f3. But the f4 pawn is attacked, and defending it first with the queen will mean conceding the b-file to Black.

And so the king itself boldly takes on the role of defender!

32 Kg3!

Now the invasion at b2 loses its point *(32 ... Rb2 33 Nf3 Rb1 34 Rb2)*, and therefore Black begins to concern himself over his 7th rank.

32 ...	**Rd8**
33 Nf3	**Rd7**
34 Rb2	**Qa5**
35 Qd2	**Qc3**
36 Bg2	**Rd8**

Such moves are not made willingly: Black has neither a plan, nor the possibility of 'standing still'.

37 Rb3	**Qa1**
38 Rb7+	**Kh8**

Even more dismal was 38 ... Bg7 39 Ng5+ Kg8 40 Rxf7+!, when Black loses a piece.

39 Qe1!

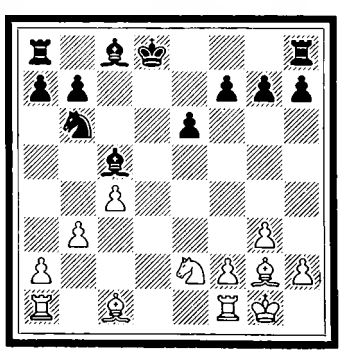
What should Black do now: exchange or allow the advance of the e-pawn and be mated?

39 ...	**Qc3**
40 e6	**Qxe1**
41 Nxe1	

Naturally, an adjournment session was not required: against the threat of 42 e7 Re8 43 Bc6 there is no defence.

And all this began with one single bold move by the king!

An example of how the king can assume the role of central defender is provided by the game **Bronstein - Lisitsyn,** Leningrad, 1947. Here, in addition, Black demonstrated a whole series of defensive means: precise measures of



passive and active defence, simplification, prophylaxis, the sacrifice of a pawn, and so on.

It would take a long time to list all of Black's difficulties: queenside undeveloped, king under fire, misplaced knight . . .

13 . . . Ke7
14 Nc3

With the threat of 15 Ne4 Bd4 16 Ba3+.

14 . . . f5
15 Bg5+ Kf7
16 Rad1 a6

Considerably restricting White's possibilities: now he does not have the manoeuvre Nb5-d6. Black's plan of defence also includes . . . h6, . . . Re8-e7 and . . . e5-e4 with the mobilization of his frozen queenside.

17 Be3

In exchanging the opponent's only active piece, White also renews his pursuit of the king.

17 . . . Bxe3
18 fxe3 Ke7!

The knight move to e4 is again parried.

19 e4 g6
20 exf5 gxf5
21 Rfe1 Rab8
22 Ne2 Rf8!

Overprotection 'à la Nimzowitsch' in action! The tempting 22 . . . Rd8 23 Rxd8 Kxd8 24 Nd4 would have led to the loss of the e6 pawn or of the so securely defended f5 pawn.

23 c5 Na8!

Again the only defence: 23 . . . Nd7 loses to 24 c6! bxc6 25 Nd4.

24 Nc3 Rd8
25 Nd5+ Kf7
26 Nb6 Rxd1
27 Rxd1 Nxb6
28 cxb6

Each white piece is much more active than the opponent's, except for . . . the king!

28 . . . Ke7
29 Rc1 Kd6
30 Rc7 h6
31 b4 e5!

Passive defence is replaced by active.

32 Rh7 Bd7
33 Rxh6+ Be6
34 a4?!

From inertia White is still aiming for a win, but already there are no objective grounds for this.

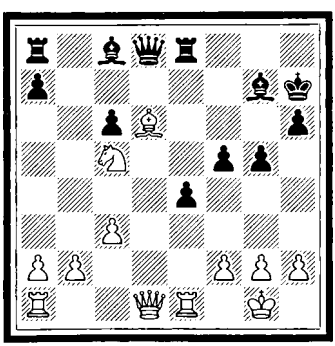
34 . . . e4
35 g4?

A logical finish would have been 33 Rh7 Rc8 34 Rxb7 Rc1+ with perpetual check.

35 . . . Ke5

36 gxf5 Bxf5
37 Rh5?

By playing 37 Kf2, White could still have saved the game. But now Black's initiative grows with every move — **37 . . . Kf4! 38 Kf1 Rd8 39 Bh3 Bg6! 40 Rh4+ Ke3 41 Rh6 Be8!,** and after the adjournment Black confidently went on to win: **42 Ke1 Bxa4 43 Bg4 Rd4 44 Rh3+ Kf4 45 Bc8 Bd1! 46 Bxb7 Bf3 Bxe4** (mate in two was threatened) **47 . . . Bxe4** etc.



In the game **Renet - Chernin,** World Team Championship, Lucerne, 1985, Black at first sight seems to be in a critical situation. He has a mass of weaknesses and his queenside is frozen, and therefore the decision by White to begin an attack on the king was perfectly justified.

21 h4 Kg6!!

The great Steinitz would have been unable to refrain from applauding. The king itself defends the h5 square against invasion by the queen, cements together its own flank, and in general "shoulders its responsibilities".

22 Re3 gxh4! 23 f3 Qg5 24 Qd2 exf3 25 Bf4 Rd8! 26 Nd3 Qxg2+ 27 Qxg2 fxg2

Somehow imperceptibly all the white pawns on the kingside have gone, although the battle is not yet decided.

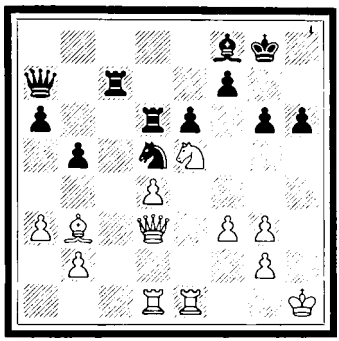
28 Rae1 a5
29 Re2 Ra7
30 Ne5+ Bxe5
31 Bxe5 f4!

Not only opening a way out for the king, but also including it in the attack!

33 Rxg2+ Kf5
33 Rf2 Rd1+
34 Kg2 h3+!

And in view of the variations 35 Kxh3 Kg6+ or 35 Kh2 Rd2 with major loss of material, White resigned.

In this position (**Dautov - Goldin,** Kiev, 1984) an experienced glance will immediately notice, paradoxical though it may sound, the weakness of . . . the a2-a8 diagonal! The white bishop, which has no opponent, is deployed on it, but the main point is that the



f7 pawn — the basis of Black's piece-pawn barricade along the diagonal — is overloaded, since it is also defending its advanced neighbour at g6. So that the attack begun by White looks both tempting and correct.

30 Nxg6!? fxg6
31 Rxe6 Rxe6
32 Bxd5

For the rook White has only two pawns, but after 32 . . . Qb6 or 32 . . . Re7 the capture with the queen on g6 will give him a third, when he will be . . . three pawns up! Black saves the situation with self-defence by the king.

32 . . . Kf7!
33 Bxe6+ Kxe6
34 Qxg6+ Kd7
35 Re1 Be7!

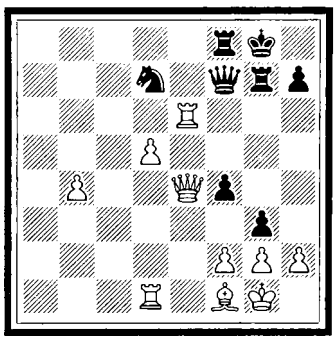
The black monarch is under fire, but, firstly, White's three pawns are 'not for free', and secondly, access to the e8 square is blocked and Black's defences are sufficiently solid.

36 d5 Qc5
37 Qe6+ Kd8
38 Qg8+ Kd7

There is no way of strengthening the attack, and perpetual check would have been fully in accordance with the demands of the position. But White overstepped the mark — **39 Qf7? Kc8 40 Re6 Kb7 41 Kh2 Bf8 42 Qf5 b4 43 axb4 Qxb4 44 Re4 Qc5 45 Re6 a5,** which allowed Black gradually to stabilize the position, win the d5 pawn, and realize his material advantage.

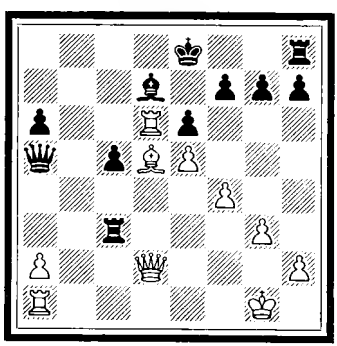
What would you have played?

No. 17



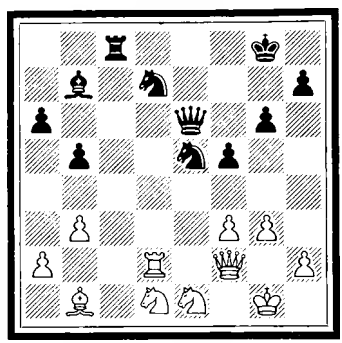
Having lost the battle in the centre and on the queenside, Black is seeking to save the game by a counterattack on the king. What device can White employ?

No. 18



White could have won by exploiting the pin on the rook — 23 Bg2 Bb5 *(23 . . . Bc8 24 Bc6+, or 23 . . . Ba4 24 Rd3)* 24 a4 with the threat of 25 Ra3. But he chose another way — **23 Rxd7,** so as either to gain an advantage after 23 . . . exd5 24 Qxd5 O—O 25 e6, or to lure the king into the fire of his heavy pieces. Which of the evils should Black choose?

No. 19



"I recommend you the careful study of this position, in which White can keep the balance only by a very ingenious manoeuvre of defence", wrote Emanuel Lasker in his book *Common Sense in Chess*. "The question concerns *only* the next move of White. Black threatens 1 . . . Bxf3 2 Nxf3 Nxf3+ 3 Qxf3 Qe1+, winning. How is White to save his game?

If 1 Rc2 Rxc2 2 Bxc2 Qc6 3 Kg2 Nxf3 4 Nxf3 Ne5, Black will regain the piece and keep the pawn plus. 1 Re2 or 1 Ne3 is also insufficient".

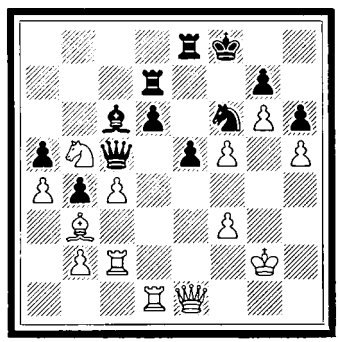
What then should White do?

7
Mines on the road

An attack is always mounted along main lines of communication — whether it be real or chess warfare. Along open files the heavy pieces penetrate into the opponent's rearguard, and along vacant ranks reserves are brought up to the decisive part of the battlefield. And finally, along diagonals attacks are mounted on the king or . . . on weak pawns. And therefore interference with the main avenues of attack and also the prevention of the opening of lines are highly important defensive devices.

The very concept of 'interference' contains a hint of sacrifice, and that is indeed the case: to carry out such an action 'for free' is practically impossible. But in order to interrupt the trajectory of an enemy offensive, one should not begrudge making a sacrifice. For this aim it is most often the exchange which is given up.

In the game **Ragozin - Furman,** 17th USSR Championship, Moscow, 1949, White's pawns on the kingside (where he is a pawn up) are far advanced, but it is only Black who can be considered the attacking side. He is threatening not so much . . . Nxh5, as . . . e4 with a direct attack on the white king. The situation is changed by an exchange sacrifice, 'cutting short" the black bishop's diagonal.



44	**Rd5!!**	**Bxd5**
45	**cxd5**	**Qb6**
46	**Rc8**	**Qd8**

Now the initiative is completely in White's hands, since all the opponent's heavy pieces are shut in.

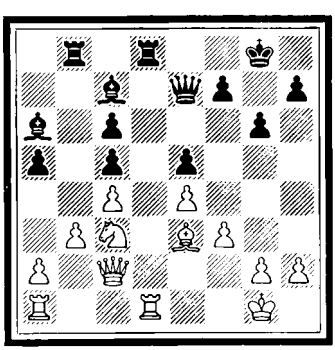
47	**Qh4!**	**Nxd5**
48	**Qxd8**	**Nf4+**

49 Kg3 Rexd8
50 Kg4

White's kingside pawns, which just a few moves ago were a target for attack, have been transformed into a powerful force. True, Black somehow managed to maintain the balance, by returning the exchange:

50 . . . Ke7 51 Nc7 Rc8 52 Nd5+ Nxd5 53 Rxc8 Ne3+ 54 Kh3 Nxf5 55 Ra8, but later, in an inferior rook ending, he failed to find the way to draw.

An analogous device was employed by Black in the game **Lyublinsky – Botvinnik,** Moscow, 1943.



With 'normal' play, after Na4 and Qf2 it is not apparent how Black can defend his c5 pawn, and with it his entire queenside. Therefore Black's decision to sacrifice the exchange, thus preventing the white pieces from attacking c5, must be considered perfectly correct.

25 . . . Rd4!

In this way Botvinnik repairs his pawn formation, obtains a protected passed pawn at d4, activates his bishops and by a kingside pawn offensive seizes the initiative. In Botvinnik's opinion, a significant role in its development is played by the remaining black rook. Finally, in the practical sense the psychological significance of this turn of events cannot be underestimated: from being the hunter, White is transformed into the hunted. It is evidently this that would explain the strategic mistake which Lyublinsky promptly makes.

26 Ne2 Bc8

Of course, not 26 . . . Rxd1 27 Rxd1 a4 28 Nc3 axb3 29 axb3, when, although he has rid himself of his weak a-pawn, Black has 'saved' his weak c-pawns.

27 Nxd4?

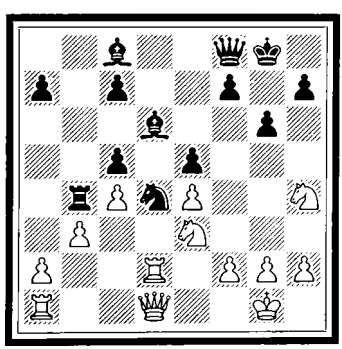
Correct was 27 Bxd4 cxd4 28 Nc1 followed by Nd3, blockading the passed d-pawn and attacking the pawns defending it at c5 and e5. By retaining his knight, White could have obtained a fairly

favourable position (compare the following example).

27 . . . cxd4 28 Bf2 c5 29 Rf1 f5 30 Bg3 Bd7 31 Rad1 f4 32 Bf2 g5

Black's initiative is growing, and although the game lasted more than 20 more moves, White was unable to avoid defeat.

In this case the exchange sacrifice turned out to be a good practical chance. But it would be wrong to resort to this device as a panacea against all ills, as White demonstrated by his ideal play in the game **Capablanca - Janowski,** Havana, 1913.



The structure of the position very much resembles the previous one, and after the exchange on d4 (White cannot tolerate the black knight for ever) it will become analogous. With the slight difference that, instead of an unwieldy bishop, White retains his knight, and this together with a timely counter-sacrifice of the exchange gives him a sort of counter-counterattack.

20 . . . Rb8
21 Nf3 f5
22 exf5 gxf5

Let us hand over the commentary to Capablanca himself:

"The position begins to look really dangerous for White. In reality Black's attack is reaching its maximum force. Very soon it will reach the apex, and then White, who is well prepared, will begin his counter action, and through his superiority in material obtain an undoubted advantage".

23 Nf1 f4
24 Nxd4 cxd4

Lyublinsky could have obtained roughly the same position in the above game with Botvinnik, had White taken the rook with his bishop.

25 Qh5 Bb7
26 Re1 c5

"He could not play 26 . . . Re8 because of 27 Rxd4. Besides, he wants to be ready to play . . . e4. At present White cannot with safety play Rxe5, but he will soon prepare

the way for it. Then, by giving up a rook for a bishop and a pawn, he will completely upset Black's attack and come out a pawn ahead. It is on this basis that White's whole defensive manoeuvre is founded", writes Capablanca.

27 f3 Re8
28 Rde2 Re6

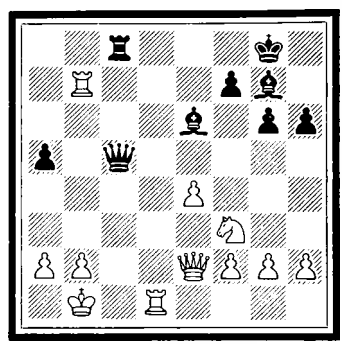
"Now the black rook enters into the game, but White is prepared. It is now time to give back the exchange", Capablanca continues.

29 Rxe5 Bxe5
30 Rxe5 Rh6
31 Qe8

And by subtle play in the endgame the future World Champion finally managed to win.

These examples, like all those in the book as a whole, are given so as, on the basis of individual and very concrete practical examples, to convince the reader of the necessity of making generalizations and in typical situations of trying to solve his own problems, arising during a game. Because it is much easier to find a correct solution, by relying on knowledge. And after a comparison of the last two positions, it can confidently be asserted that, had Lyublinsky been familiar with Capablanca's game, the outcome of his clash with Botvinnik could well have been different.

Here are a few further examples.



White has a great material advantage, but the game is not yet settled. There is the threat of the black a-pawn's further advance, and — most important — the bishops are aimed most unequivocally at the white king.

In the game **Petrosian - Radulov,** European Team Championship, Plovdiv, 1983, White solved his defensive problems in a radical way, by using a rook to block one of the bishops' diagonals.

25 Rb5 Qc7
26 Rbd5!

The threat of 27 Nd4 forces Black to win back the exchange, and his attack loses

markedly in strength. White's two extra pawns are sufficient . . .

26 . . . Bxd5
27 exd5 Qd6
28 Rd2!

Prophylaxis: now the b2 point (Black has no other target to attack) is securely defended.

28 . . . a4
29 a3 Rb8
30 Ka2 Qb6
31 d6!

The same principle in action: very well, White's material advantage may be reduced, but Black's activity will be extinguished. White could have clung to the pawn by 31 Ne5, but this would have led to unnecessary complications.

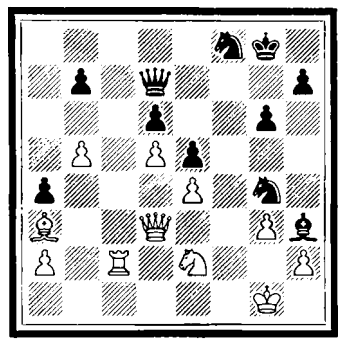
31 . . . Qb3+
32 Kb1 Qxa3
33 d7 Qf8
34 Ne5! Bxe5

Otherwise the threat of Nc6 cannot be parried.

35 Qxe5

With gain of tempo: 36 Qxb8! is now threatened.

35 . . . Rd8 36 Qd6 Qxd6 37 Rxd6 Kf8 38 Ka2 Ke7 39 Rd2, and within a few moves, after losing his a-pawn, Black resigned.

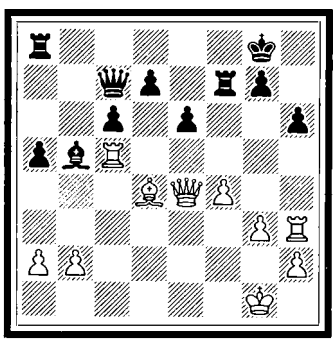


In the game **Vitolinsh - Mukhin,** Riga, 1972, Black has just sacrificed the exchange, and here he played **30 . . . Qd8!,** including his queen in the attack on the enemy king. After **31 Qf3? Qb6+ 32 Bc5 dxc5** White resigned, but he could have parried the threats, had he based his defence on the secure blocking of the main line of attack — the a7-g1 diagonal.

This could have been achieved by 31 Bb2! Qb6+ 32 Nd4 Nd7 *(32 . . . exd4 33 Qxd4* would have led to the exchange of queens and an endgame, where the rook is clearly superior to the two minor pieces) 33 Rc8+ Kf7 34 Qc4 Ne3 35 Qc7, and all the winning chances are with White.

Remember how Furman suffered from the blocking of the long light-square diagonal in his game with Ragozin

(p.89)? Here too the Leningrad grandmaster's downfall was the long diagonal, although this time the dark-square one. But on this occasion he was the defending side . . .



In the game **Kuzmin - Furman,** 40th USSR Championship, Baku, 1972, Black is a pawn up and his defences are secure enough. But nevertheless all the play still lies ahead: White's pieces are aimed at the king, and the opposite-colour bishops merely intensify the attack. Therefore it was for the blocking of the highly important a1-h8 diagonal that Black should have aimed, since he has nothing with which to oppose the d4 bishop. To this end 26 . . . d6! was suitable, since 27 Rxb5 meets with the tactical refutation 27 . . . e5! (this is more convincing than *27 . . . d5 28 Qg6 cxb5 29 Rxh6)* 28 fxe5 *(28 Bb6 Qc8!,* and both white rooks are en prise) 28 . . . e5 29 Qg6 cxb5, and the threat of 30 . . . Qc1+ with mate does not leave White time to capture on h6.

White would therefore have been forced to reply 27 Rch5 (after *27 Rc1 e5! 28 fxe5 dxe5 29 Qxe5 Qd7* Black launches a counterattack), but after the same 27 . . . e5! 28 fxe5 dxe5 the white king is more exposed than its black opponent.

In the game, however, Black blocked the path of the white rook to the kingside and simultaneously parried the threatened capture on b5 by **26 . . . d5?** But this did not help in parrying the attack: the white bishop was too strong.

27	**Qg6!**	**e5**
28	**Bxe5**	**Qa7**
29	**Rxh6!**	

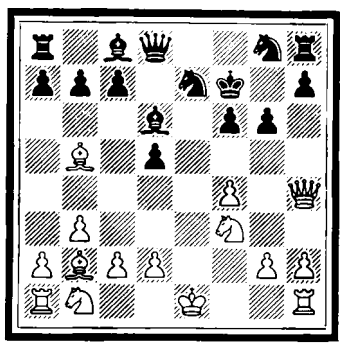
Alas, Black had reckoned only on 29 Bd4 Qe7 with a counterattack.

29	**. . .**	**Qxc5+**
30	**Kg2**	**Bf1+**

Forced, since mate results from 30 . . . Rd8 31 Qh7+ Kf8 32 Re6 Re7 33 Bxg7+ Ke8 34 Bf6 Rxe6 35 Qg8+, while on 30 . . . Qa7 White has the decisive 31 Qh7+ Kf8 32 Re6 Re7 33 Bd6.

31 Kxf1 Qc4+ 32 Kf2 Qe4 33 Qxe4 dxe4 34 Rxc6 a4 35 a3 Kh7 36 Ke3

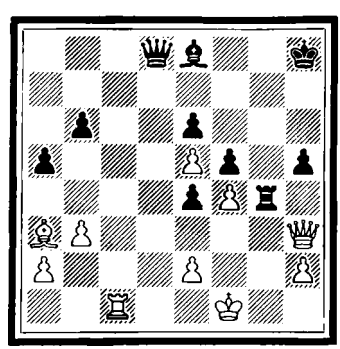
And White, after picking up the e4 pawn, realized his material advantage.



In the game **Gonsior - Novak,** Czechoslovakia, 1979, it is apparent that White's aggressive queen sortie has provoked a number of weakenings of the opponent's kingside, and he is continuing to attack. But Black has already prepared . . . Nf5 and . . . h5, completely neutralizing White's offensive.

Therefore, to maintain his initiative, White chose **10 Ne5+ Kg7** (obviously bad is 10 . . . fxe5? 11 fxe5 Bc5 12 Rf1+ Bf5 13 e6+ Kxe6 14 Bxh8 with the threat of 15 g4 and decisive gain of material) **11 g4,** but he overlooked a reply which closed the main line of attack.

There followed **11 . . . d4!,** after which 12 Bxd4? was bad because of 12 . . . Be5!, as was 12 Nd3 h5! (a counter-blow in the attacked sector — this device is examined later in Chapter 18) 13 g5 Nf5 with an obvious advantage, as well as the game continuation **12 Bc4? fxe5 13 fxe5 Bxe5 14 O—O Nh6** when Black was a piece up. But even after the best move 12 Nf3 c5 Black's position would have been close to winning, in view of his dominance in the centre, more harmonious piece arrangement, and the threats of . . . Bxf4 and . . . h5.



At the finish of the 13th game of the **Karpov-Kasparov** World Championship Return Match, London/Leningrad, 1986, which was referred to earlier in Chapter 1, Black has seized the initiative and forced his opponent to solve a

number of problems. There appears to be no defence of the attacked f4 pawn other than 34 Qe3 *(34 e3?? loses quickly to 34 . . . Qd3+ 35 Ke1 Rg1+ 36 Kf2 Rxc1 37 Bxc1 Qc2+)*, but in this case, after the preparatory 34 . . . Bf7, the threat of . . . Qh4 is highly unpleasant. White finds a different solution.

34 Bd6!

The black queen cannot now break in through the centre, and a pawn is not too high a price to pay for this.

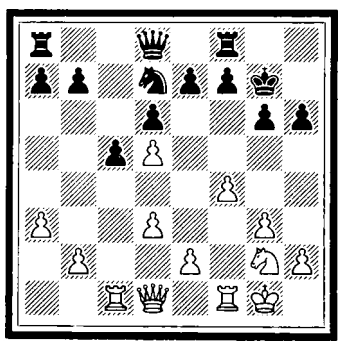
34 . . .	**Rxf4+**
35 Ke1	**Rg4**
36 Qe3	**Qg5**

The threatened invasion at h6 has forced Black to exchange queens, after which, with the opposite-colour bishops, his extra pawn has no significance. Within a few moves peace was concluded.

Thus the sacrifice for the sake of cutting lines of attack, for all its double-edged nature, is a device which should find a place in the repertoire of any player who is forced to defend.

★ ★ ★

Another, related method of defence, consists of preventing, at the necessary moment, the opening lines along which an attacking wave may surge. Here the defending side often manages to get by without sacrificing at all, or else he restricts himself to minimal loss of material.



In the game **Krasnov - Damsky,** Moscow, 1966, the white pieces are still on their own territory, but nevertheless an attack on the black king may flare up at any moment.

19 f5!

With the simple threat of 20 fxg6, which will either break up the black monarch's pawn screen, or else give White the e6 square. In this case, incidentally, on the central e5 square the black knight would have been nicely placed, but its white opponent at e6 would have been more effective.

19 . . . g5

At this point Black found an essential defensive resource and . . . felt reassured about the outcome of the game.

20 e4 f6!

This looks like a blunder in view of the natural continuation of the attack by White, but . . . On 20 . . . Ne5 White has the extremely unpleasant 'bayonet thrust' f5-f6 (immediately or slightly later), while after 20 . . . Nf6 the black knight alone cannot cope with the defence of the kingside.

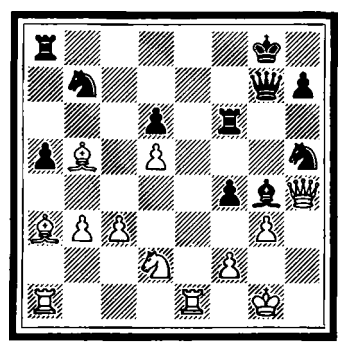
In addition, White is offered a tempting bait: by a piece sacrifice to create irresistible threats to the king. And that is what he does.

21 Nf4 gxf4
22 Qg4+ Kh8
23 Qg6

Now the white rook goes to h4 via f4, or else it lands the concluding blow along the open g-file after gxf4. In a word, there is no defence, apart from:

23 . . . f3!

Black would have lost after both 23 . . . Qe8 24 Qxh6+ Kg8 25 Rxf4 Ne5 26 Rh4, and 23 . . . Ne5 24 Qxh6+ Kg8 25 gxf4, driving back the knight and mating on the g- and h-files. But the interposed move played, preventing the opening of lines — one of the chief methods of defence! — enables Black to save the game. For example, 24 Rxf3 Ne5 25 Qxh6+ Kg8 26 Rf4 Rf7 27 Rh4 Rg7, and White has nothing more than perpetual check.



In the game **Katalymov - Razuvayev,** USSR Championship Elimination Tournament, 1976, Black is a pawn down, his knight is out of play at b7, and yet his attack may cause the white king some anxious moments. More precisely, it could have done, if in reply to **31 . . . fxg3** White had replied 32 fxg3. Then 32 . . . Nf4! 33 gxf4 *(33 . . . Rh6* was threatened) 33 . . . Bh5+! gives Black chances both after 34 Kh2 Rh6, and after 34 Kf2 Rxf4+ 35 Qxf4 Rf8 36 Qxf8+ Qxf8+ 37 Kg1 Qg7+ 38 Kh2 Qxc3. But . . .

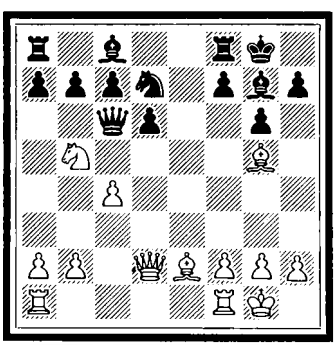
32 f3!

Lines for attack are not opened, and the black g3 pawn provides excellent cover for the white king. In addition, here too Black is forced to sacrifice a piece.

32 ... Bxf3
33 Nxf3 Nf4

Or 33 ... Rxf3 34 Qxh5 Rxc3 35 Re8+, transposing into an ending with the 'advantage of the two bishops' against one black knight.

34 Re4! Rc8
35 Rae1 Resigns.



Having sacrificed a pawn in the game **Uhlmann - Vadasz,** Tallinn, 1977, White continues the same tactics; increasing his lead in development and threatening to break up Black's entire queenside.

13 Bf3 Qxc4
14 Be2 Qc6
15 Rac1 Nc5
16 b4 a6
17 bxc5

17 Nd4 is strongly met by 17 ... Qd5, and 17 Na3 by 17 ... Ne4 18 Qe3 Qe8.

17 ... axb5
18 Be7 d5!

By giving up the exchange Black prevents the opening of lines, and White's strategy is immediately seen to be dubious.

19 Qb4 Bd7
20 Bxf8 Bxf8
21 Rfd1 b6!

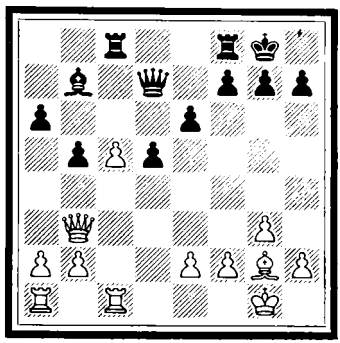
After 21 ... Rxa2 22 Bf3 Be6 23 Qd4 White would have maintained approximate equality, whereas now the avalanche of black pawns is irresistible.

22 Qb3 bxc5
23 Rxd5 Be6
24 Bf3 Rb8
25 Rd2 Bxb3
26 Bxc6 Be6

White can only dream of the opposite-colour bishops after a variation such as 26 ... Bh6 27 axb3 Bxd2 28 Rxc5.

27 Rcd1 c4, and on move 41 White resigned.

In the game **Romanishin - Dolmatov,** Moscow, 1985, White's passed pawn would appear to give him the advantage. But a more careful



study of the position allows a sufficient means of defence to be found. Black merely needs to prevent the opening of lines on the queenside, and the importance of the passed pawn will fall sharply.

This is achieved by a typical procedure.

19 . . . a5!

Now on a2-a4 there follows . . . b4, while on b2-b4 the black a-pawn takes a step forward. And from the rear the white rooks are unable to urge on their c5 pawn. The game is level.

20 Qd3 Rfd8

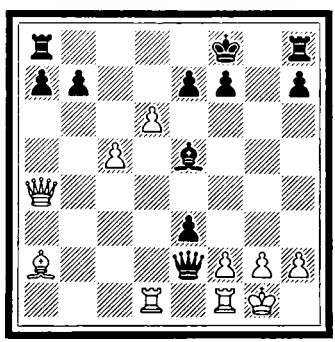
Prophylaxis in the event of e2-e4.

21 b3 b4?

A serious strategic mistake. Black contradicts himself, allowing the opening of the queenside, and his position immediately becomes difficult.

22 a3 Bc6 23 axb4 axb4 24 Qd4 Rb8 25 Ra6 Qc7 26 Rb6 Rxb6 27 cxb6 Qd6 28 e4!, and White gradually converted his advantage into a win.

Petrosian - Fischer
Buenos Aires, 1971



At the time this game appeared in chess publications throughout the world: it was Fischer's first defeat in the series of Candidates Matches for the World Championship. But it turns out that it too could have been avoided by the American grandmaster, had he resorted to the defensive device under discussion.

The diagram position is characterized mainly by the vulnerable position of the black king. The opposite-colour bishops merely intensify the attack, and after the opening of the f-file the f7 square will become vulnerable.

That is in fact what happened.

23 . . .	**Qh5?**
24 f4!	**e2**

Black is practically forced to win the exchange, since after 24 . . . Bf6 25 Rd5 the opponent's attack intensifies 'for free'.

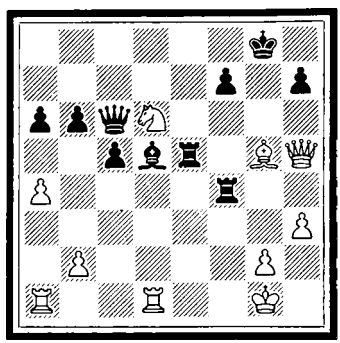
25 fxe5	**exd1=Q**
26 Rxd1	**Qxe5**
27 Rf1	**f6**

Or 27 . . . Qxc5+ 28 Kh1 f6 *(28 . . . b5 29 Qe4!)* 29 Qb3 Qh5 30 Qe6 and wins.

28 Qb3	**Kg7**
29 Qf7+	**Kh6**
30 dxe7	**f5**
31 Rxf5	**Qd4+**
32 Kh1	Resigns.

Meanwhile, in the diagram position Black had the chance to win the exchange, *without opening* the fatal f-file. This could have been achieved by 23 . . . Bxh2+ 24 Kxh2 Qh5+ 25 Kg1 e2, and after 26 dxe7+ Kg7! 27 Rd5! (avoiding the trap *27 Rd3? Qh1+!!*, when Black wins) 27 . . . exf1=Q+ 28 Kxgf1 Qg6! 29 Qd4+ f6, although White retains an attacking position, nevertheless nothing decisive is apparent.

And to conclude this chapter — an example of how Black (in **Portisch - Radulov,** Nice Olympiad, 1974) could have defended, had he himself *not opened* additional attacking lines for the opponent.



For the moment White is a piece up. But although Black cannot take the knight immediately — 23 . . . Qxd6? 24 Bxf4, he can exploit the pin on the white bishop and attack it with one of his pawns.

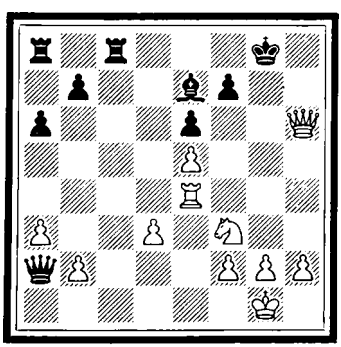
In the game Black chose for this the f-pawn, but after **23 . . . f6? 24 Re1!** he immediately resigned, since 24 . . . Rxg5 25 Re8+ Kg7 26 Re7+ Kf8 27 Rf7+ leads to mate: the white rook makes splendid use of the opening of the 7th rank.

Therefore correct was 23 . . . h6!, leaving the black king relatively sheltered. The tactical basis of this move lies in the diverting of the white queen from its control of e2 in the event of 24 Qxh6

— then the invasion 24 . . . Re2 gives Black excellent winning chances, for example, 25 Bxf4? Rxg2+ 26 Kf1 Bc4+! 27 Nxc4 *(27 Ke1 Re2+)* 27 . . . Qf3+ and mates, or 25 Ne4 Rfxe4 26 Qxc6 (on *26 Bf6* there follows *26 . . . Rxg2+ 27 Kh1 Rh4!*) 26 . . . Bxc6 27 Rd6 Re6! 28 Rxe6 Rxg2+ and, despite the opposite-colour bishops, Black has excellent winning chances (variations by A. Zaitsev).

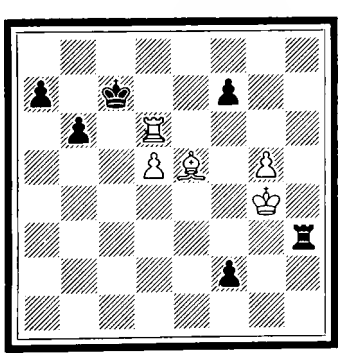
And 24 Re1 is not to be feared here in view of 24 . . . Rxg5 25 Re8+ Kg7, when it is White who loses . . .

What would you have played?



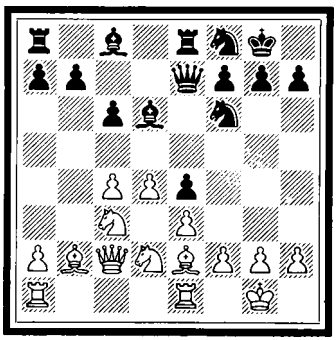
No. 20

Can Black's extra rook save him from defeat? — after all, **1 . . . Qb1+** is met by **2 Ne1,** when he has to give up his queen. Or is this not obligatory?



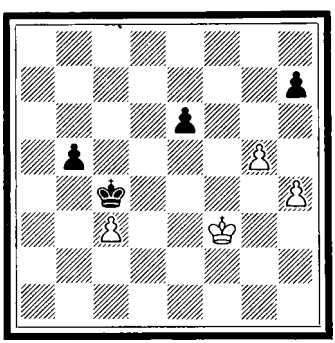
No. 21

It is Black to move. But he is a piece down, the discovered check 38 Rf6+ is threatened, and if he acquires a new queen *(37 . . . f1=Q)* it is immediately lost. The prophylactic retreat 37 . . . Kc8 also loses to 38 Rf6 . . .



No. 22

By playing **14 Bf1?** White committed an almost textbook mistake and resigned after just 5 more moves. What should he have done?



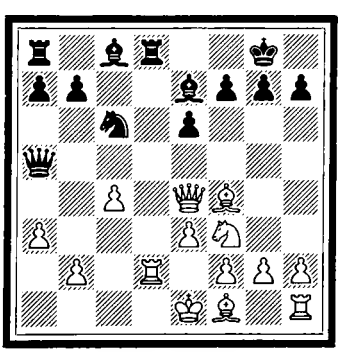
No. 23

It was line-interference which saved Black in this seemingly hopeless ending. But how to prepare for it?

8
Escaping from custody

"A pinned piece's defensive power is only imaginary. He only makes a gesture as if he would defend; in reality he is crippled and immobile", wrote Aron Nimzowitsch in his chess classic *My System*. And he continued: "It is very profitable to play for the win of the pinned piece" . . .

Indeed, a countless number of games have been won by the fact that a pinned piece or pawn became first an object of constant concern, and then was lost.



In the game **Miles-Belyavsky,** Wijk ann Zee, 1983, White has an extra pawn and . . . an unpleasant pin on his rook at d2. Moreover, the pin is an absolute one — behind the rook, the king is hiding. In an attempt to defend, White chose:

14 Qc2?!

14 Bd3? f5 is not good, but the interposition of 14 c5! would have helped — 14 . . . Qxc5 15 Bd3 f5 16 Qc4 with a roughly equal game.

14 . . . e5
15 Bg3 e4!
16 Qxe4

The paradoxical 16 Ng1!? would perhaps have been more tenacious, intending to transfer the knight to c3 and break the pin.

16 . . . Bf5
17 Qf4 Rxd2

In accordance with Nimzowitsch: an exchange on the pinning square and a new pin, with White now having one less defending piece.

18 Nxd2 Rd8
19 e4 Bg4!

With the threats of 20 . . . Bg5 and 20 . . . Bb4!

20 c5

By blocking the 5th rank

and the a3-f8 diagonal White delays the end, but that is all; 20 Qe3 was also inadequate — 20 . . . Bb4! 21 Bd3 Bxd2+ 22 Qxd2 Rxd3 23 Qxa5 Rd1 mate.

20 . . . Nb4!
21 f3

Or 21 axb4 Qa1+, or 21 Be2 g5!

21 . . . g5!
22 axb4

22 Qxg4 Nc2+ leads to mate.

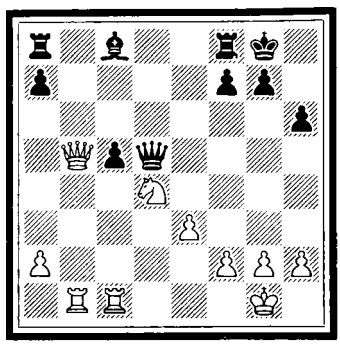
22 . . . Qa1+
23 Ke2 gxf4

Three moves later White resigned.

But . . . By no means every pin is so fatal for the defending side — this is apparent even from the above game. Ways of breaking a pin have long been known, such as driving away the pinning piece, moving out of the pin — withdrawing the screened piece or bringing less valuable fighting units to its aid. There is no real need to give examples: every player is familiar with them.

Here we should like to draw attention to two other features.

The first: breaking a pin (apart from by the ways listed above) may also be possible if the defending side creates a counter-threat against a vulnerable point of the opponent's. Such opportunities should not be overlooked, as they occur constantly.



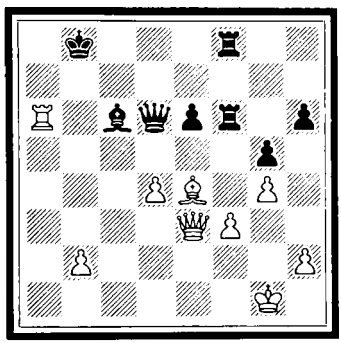
In the game **Doroshkevich - Zilbershtein,** Rostov-on-Don, 1972, after the fall of the pinned c-pawn White should win even in the event of 19 . . . Qxa2, so active are all his pieces . . .

19 . . . Bh3!

By the threat of mate Black withdraws his queen to a defended position, breaks the pin, and takes play into a drawn ending.

20 gxh3 Qg5+ 21 Kf1 cxd4 22 Qxg5 hxg5 23 exd4 Rad8 24 Rb4 Rfe8!, with the inevitable exchange of one pair of rooks (otherwise the white king can never reach the centre) and equality. With such a broken pawn formation, White's

extra pawn is of no particular significance.



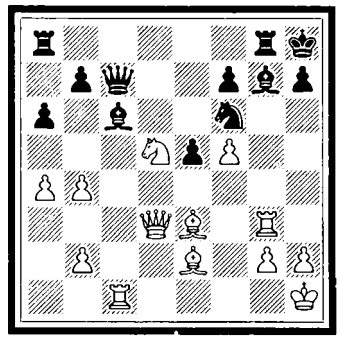
For an instant White is a rook down in the game **Kruusnauk-Kostina,** Tiraspol, 1974, but he is intending to pick up the pinned bishop. And 32 . . . Rc8 does not help; after 33 Qb3+ Kc7 34 Rxc6+ Black's chances of saving the game are slim.

But he managed to disentangle himself by mounting a far from obvious attack on the white king.

32 . . .	**Rxf3!**
33 Bxf3	**Rxf3**

And it transpires that on 34 Qxf3 Black removes his queen from the pin with check — 34 . . . Qxd4+, and after 35 Qf2 Qd1+ 36 Qf1 Qxf1+ 37 Kxf1 Bb5+ he emerges a piece up.

White preferred to lose in a different way — **34 Qd2 . . .**



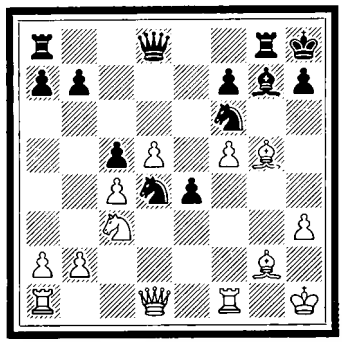
In the game **Durao-Smejkal,** Skopje Olympiad, 1972, White's play is based on the pin of the bishop at c6. Black decided to move the screened piece — his queen: **21 . . . Nxd5 22 Qxd5 Qe7 23 Qc5 Qf6,** and White, after returning the pawn — **24 Bg5 Qxf5 25 Bd3 Qe6 26 Rf1,** established piece control over the entire board and very quickly won.

Meanwhile, Black could have broken the pin by interposing 21 . . . e4! Now 22 Qd4 Nxd5 23 Qxd5 does not work because of 23 . . . Qxg3, and after the forced 22 Nxc7 exd3 23 Bxd3 *(23 Nxa8 dxe2 24 Nb6 Rd8 25 Re1 Rd1 26 Bf2 Ne4* is dangerous for White) 23 . . . Rad8! Black has a good game, despite being two pawns down. For example, 24 Bb6(g5) Nh5!, with an attack on b2, since if 25 Rh3 Bxg2+.

And the second point: the defending side can sometimes find the most radical solution to the problem — sacrificing the screened piece! Grounds for this occur much more often than we imagine. We must merely force ourselves to renounce the scale, acquired from childhood, of relative piece values — experience constantly confirms the opposite. It was no accident that, back in 1929, one of the most distinguished chess reformers (from the viewpoint of its understanding) Richard Reti justifiably commented:

"During recent years, in place of the Steinitzian static assessment of position (weak points etc.) or, it would be better to say, in addition to it, the dynamic assessment of position has been advancing more and more persistently. Seemingly poor, cramped positions may prove to be good, if they contain latent strength . . ."

Since that time the dynamics of the pieces has acquired a still greater role: in modern-day chess this is one of the main (if not the main!) factors in the assessment of a position. In such cases a material deficit can be disregarded.



In the game **Bilek-Gligoric,** Teesside, 1972, for all the double-edged nature of the position, Black is faced with several problems: how to escape from the pin, how to give up as dearly as possible his doomed pawn at e4 . . . For example, 22 . . . Nf3 23 Bxf3 *(23 Nxe4? Nxe4! 24 Bxd8 Ng3* mate) 23 . . . exf3 24 Qxf3 Qb6 25 b3 Rae8, although in the distant future such a turn of events does not give hopes of saving the game. Black resorted to more determined measures.

22 . . .	**Bf8!**
23 Nxe4	**Nxe4!!**
24 Bxd8	**Ng3+**
25 Kg1	**Rxd8**

For the queen Black has only two pieces, but how active they are!

26 Rf3

The knight at d4 is worth a rook. Besides, on 26 Rf2 there would have followed 26 . . .

Bh6 27 Qd3 Rde8, when White cannot hold his e3 point.

26 . . . Bd6
27 Qd3 Rde8
28 Raf1?!

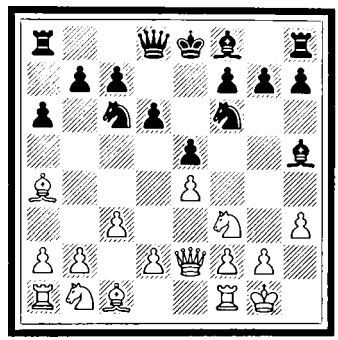
In time trouble White tries to "buy off" the opponent's mounting activity, but he loses all his material advantage. It is true that 28 Rf2 Nde2+ 29 Rxe2 Nxe2+ 30 Kf1 Rxg2! would have lost, but 28 Rd1 Re2 29 Rd2 was more tenacious.

28 . . . Nxf1
29 Rxf1 Ne2+
30 Kh1

Or 30 Kf2 Bg3+ 31 Kf3 Nd4+.

30 . . . Ng3+ 31 Kg1 Nxf1 32 Kxf1 Rg3 33 Qd1 Reg8, winning the bishop and the game.

The following example closely borders on another section — the sacrifice of the queen for a counterattack. This is natural: 'pure' elements of chess strategy and tactics occur rather rarely, but the idea of escaping from the pin, which lies at the basis of Black's entire plan in **Ciric - Nezhmetdinov,** Rostov-on-Don, 1961, is expressed extremely clearly.



8 . . . g5?!

In principle, a typical pawn storm against an already castled position, but at the same time Black consciously enters the zone of enhanced risk. The basis for this is the rejoinder prepared on move 14.

9 g4 b5
10 Bb3 Bg6
11 d4 h5!?

In a counterattack, activity is essential. The passive 11 . . . h6 12 dxe5 followed by the reinforcement of e4 would have left the bishop at g6 shut in for a long time, if not for ever.

12 Bxg5

After the game it was established that White could have gained an advantage by 12 Nxg5! hxg4 13 hxg4 Qd7 *(13 . . . Nxe4* does not work because of *14 Bd5)* 14 f3, with that same imprisonment

of the opponent's light-square bishop. In White's defence it should be said that he simply did not anticipate the opponent's radical breaking of the pin.

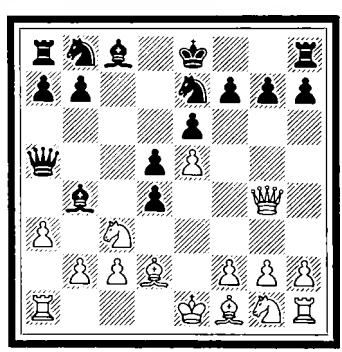
12 . . . hxg4
13 Nh4 Bh5
14 Bd5

Both black knights are pinned, and loss of material, major loss, is inevitable. Why then did Black readily go in for this position?

14 . . . Nxd5!!
15 Bxd8 Nf4
16 Qe3 Nxh3+
17 Kg2 Nf4+
18 Qxf4

Fearing a mating attack after 18 Kg3 *(18 Kg1 Bh6* is worse) 18 . . . Rxd8, White immediately returns the queen and remains a pawn down. Indeed, in variations such as 19 Nf5 Bg6 20 Kxg4 (or *20 Qd2 Rh3+ 21 Kxg4 Bh5+ 22 Kg5 Ne6+ 23 Kf6 Rf3!*, with the unavoidable *24 . . . Be7* mate) 20 . . . Rg8! with the threats of 21 . . . Bxf5++ 22 Kxf5 Ne7+ 23 Kf6 Rg6 mate and 21 . . . Bh5++ 22 Kh4 Rg4 mate there appears to be no defence, but after 19 Nd2 Black would still have had to demonstrate his case, either by the direct 19 . . . Bh6, or by the flexible 19 . . . Ne7, not allowing the white knight in at f5 and maintaining all the threats. But in any case, having broken the Gordian knot of the pin, Black would have seized the initiative.

In general it should be said that, by overcoming certain rules of conservatism in one's thinking and by coming to 'believe' in the legitimacy of this device, one can successfully solve problems arising at the board. This is what happened, for example, in the game **Nezhmetdinov – Sokolsky,** Kiev, 1957, where Black, by employing a theoretical innovation, counted on being the first to begin active play in the centre.



It is White to move. After 8 Qxg7 Rg8 he simply loses a piece, and in the variation 8 Qxd4 Nbc6 9 Qf4 d4 — a pawn. Finally, 8 Ne4 Bxd2+ 9 Nxd2 Nf5 is also clearly in

Black's favour.

White nevertheless found a solution.

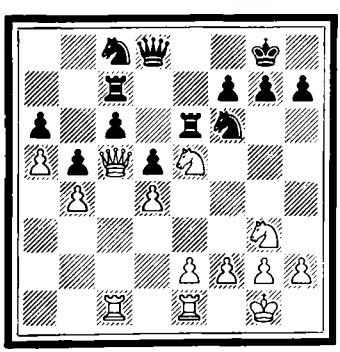
9 axb4! Qxa1+
9 Nd1

Scorning the pin, White has excluded the enemy queen from the sphere of activity, at a rather high price, it is true. On the other hand, the question has now been transferred onto a plane to which chess is accustomed: which is more important — passive material or active spirit?

The answer was provided by White winning within just 14 moves: **9 . . . Nbc6 10 b5 Nxe5 11 Qxg7 N7g6 12 h4 h5 13 Rh3! Bd7 14 Nf3! Nc4** (or 14 . . . Nxf3+ 15 Rxf3 O—O—O 16 Ra3 Qb1 17 Bd3 with the terrible threat of 18 c4) **15 Bxc4 dxc4 16 Ng5 O—O—O 17 Ra3 Qb1 18 Rxa7 c3 19 bxc3 Qxb5** (at last the black queen comes into play, but it is too late) **20 Nxf7 Kb8** (after 20 . . . Rhg8 White wins by both 21 Qxd4, and 21 Qxg8 with the threat of 22 Nd6+) **21 Nxh8 Rxh8 22 Ra1 Be8 23 Qxd4.**

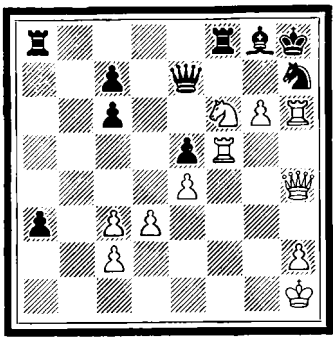
Here Black resigned, and after this his entire opening idea was shelved.

What would you have played?



No. 24

Here White played **28 e4,** for some reason not especially fearing the forcing variation **28 . . . Nxe4 29 Nxe4 dxe4 30 Rxe4 f6.** Was he right?

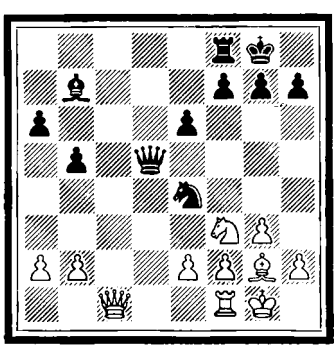


No. 25

In this fantastic position both the black and white knights are pinned. The difference in the pins is nevertheless obvious — what follows from this? It is White to move.

No. 26

16 Ng5

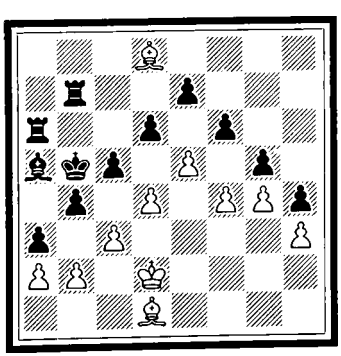


In this way White decided to achieve either a positional advantage — 16 . . . Qf5*(16. . . f5 17 Nxe4 fxe4 18 b3 Rc8 19 Qb2)* 17 Nxe4 Bxe4 18 f3 Bb7 *(18 . . . Ba8)* 19 Rd1, or a material one — 16 . . . Qxg5 17 Qxg5 Nxg5 18 Bxb7, when the threat of trapping the knight by 19 h4 does not leave Black time to defend his a6 pawn. Moreover, White's plan is based on the pin on the knight at e4 . . .

9
Returning to the Middle Ages . . .

There is nothing surprising in this: that was the time when a single lone knight with a handful of troops had the chance of surving against an immesurably greater enemy force. To do this he had to lock himself in his ancestral castle, standing on some cliff, raise the drawbridge, lower the portcullis and . . . hope that the besiegers would go away before hunger set in in the castle.

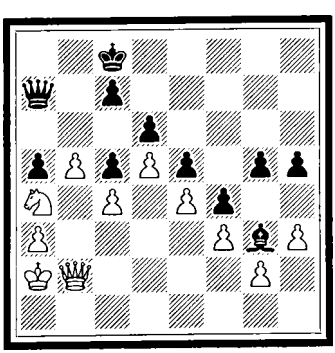
In the same way the defender in chess can often find a refuge. This is a so-called 'fortress': an arrangement of the pieces and pawns in which the superiority of one side proves insufficient for victory.



The principle of an ideal fortress is illustrated by this well known composition.

1 Ba4+! Kxa4 (1 . . . Kc4 does not change things) **2 b3+ Kb5 3 c4+ Kc6 4 d5+ Kd7 5 e6+ Kxd8 6 f5,** and Black is unable to break through this chess 'Maginot line'.

The most interesting fact is that such barricades arise not only in artificially created compositions, but also in actual play. Of course, in the game **A. Petrosian - Khazai,** Yerevan, 1970, it was a knowledge of this defensive procedure which suggested to Black a seemingly paradoxical move.



32 . . . Qb6!?

The bait proved too attractive, and instead of the slow, but perfectly logical and consistent manoeuvre 33 Qd2 followed by Kb3, Nb2, Ka4, and Nd3-c1-b3 winning the a-pawn, White was tempted . . .

33 Nxb6+? cxb6
34 h4

This is what White was counting on, but . . .

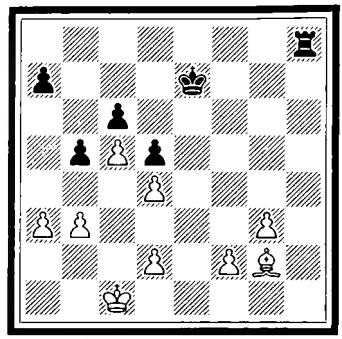
34 . . . gxh4
35 Qd2 h3!
36 gxh3 h4

The fortress is erected! — draw.

Even so, it is unlikely to happen very often that blocked pawn chains will be kept intact until deep into the middlegame or especially the endgame. A fortress can more often be constructed because individual pawn islands block the path of the enemy king, and control the invasion squares into their territory.

This idea is embodied in, so to speak, purely refined form, in a famous study by **Chekhover,** 1947.

White's material advantage is only nominal, since the rook is threatening to invade the 2nd rank and win the f2 pawn *(1 Bf3 Rh2),* after which the g-pawn will be either lost or halted and the black king

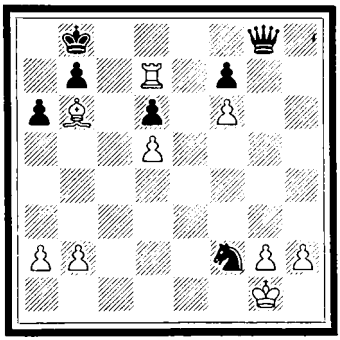


will begin to penetrate into enemy territory.

The saving idea is expressive and elegant: **1 Kd1 Rh2 2 Ke1!! Rxg2 3 Kf1 Rh2 4 Kg1 Rh5(h6, h7, h8) 5 f3,** and the gates of the castle slam shut. This 'one-rook' ending is drawn: as long as the rook stays on the h-file, the white king moves between g1 and g2, while if it moves to the e-file, then the king moves between f1 and f2. It is also not possible to break open the pawn chains on the queenside: after . . . a5 White replies to . . . a4 with b3-b4, and to . . . b4 with a3-a4.

Using this idea, Black could have created a fortress and defended in the game **Khramov - Roshal,** Moscow, 1970.

After temporarily sacrificing his queen, White was intending to regain it and go into an ending with two (or one) extra

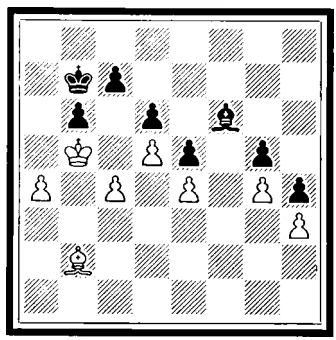


pawns. And that is what happened after **30 . . . Nh3+(!!)** — the exclamation marks are given in brackets, because this saving move was not associated with the correct defensive idea — **31 Kf1 Nf4(??) 32 Rd8+ Qxd8 33 Bxd8 Nxd5 34 g4** etc.

But Black could have played 31 . . . Kc8!! 32 Rd8+ Qxd8 33 Bxd8 Kxd8! 34 gxh3 b6, when White's extra pawns would not have brought him victory. The fortress walls are unbreachable, and the black king moves between g8 and h8, from which there is no way of driving him out . . .

Even so, it should be remembered that even the erected walls of a fortress sometimes require surveillance, and taking away the patrols from one of the 'turrets' may mean condemning a seemingly secure citadel to capitulation.

Benes - Hofman
Hungary, 1981



"The fortress is secure!", Black evidently thought, and he carelessly lifted his over-protection (this is a further example of its use) of e5.

37 . . . Be7?
38 c5!

The carelessness is immediately punished. Now the fortress collapses both after 38 . . . dxc5 39 Bxe5, and after 38 . . . bxc5 39 a5, when by the advance of his pawn to a6 White ensures the invasion of his king at c6.

38 . . . Bf6 39 cxb6 cxb6 40 Bc1 Be7 41 Be3 Bd8 42 Bf2 Bc7 43 Bg1!

Zugzwang is assured — 43 . . . Bd8 44 Be3.

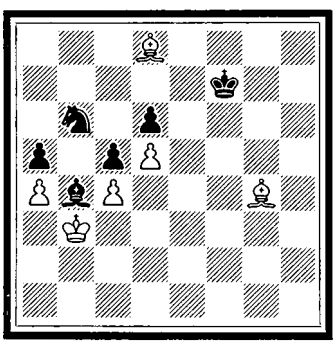
43 . . . Ka7
44 Kc6

The position contains a dual solution: White also wins by 44 a5 Kb7 45 Bxb6 (but not

45 axb6?? Bd8, when there is again a fortress on the board).

44 ... Bb8 45 Bxb6+ Ka6 46 Bc7 Resigns.

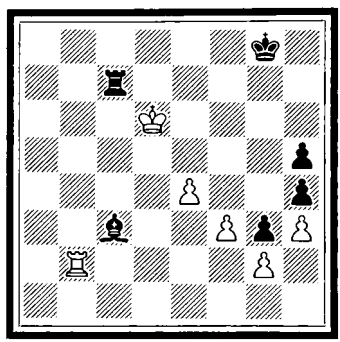
Often a fortress arises because the only path of the enemy king into one's position is blocked by one's own king. This situation also occurs more often than it might seem.



In the game **Kobaladze - Tsereteli,** Tbilisi, 1970, after 43 . . . Na8 44 Bh5+ Kf8 Black was defenceless against the king march Kc2-d3-e4-f5-e6 with the 'confiscation of the entire black estate'. But in adjournment analysis he managed to find a saving idea.

43 ...	**Ke8!!**
44 Bxb6	**Ke7**

The king securely guards the invasion paths, and there is no zugzwang — the black bishop can move. White's extra piece is shut in, and the sacrifice of the bishop for a pawn is insufficient, leading to opposite-colour bishops. Draw agreed.



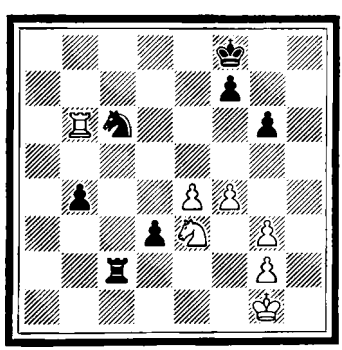
In the game **Polugayevsky-Zakharov,** Leningrad, 1963, Black's advantage is quite sufficient for a win. But he was tempted into simplifying the position, overlooking the unexpected speed of the white king.

54 ...	**Bxb2?**
55 Kxc7	**Kf7**
56 Kd6	**Kf6**
57 Kd5	**Kg5**
58 Kc4!	

Just in time the king reaches f1, from where it blocks the path of its black opponent to the key g2 pawn, and given the opportunity it will slip through to h1, in order to be stalemated. The fate of the e- and f-pawns is of little concern to White: they can simply be given up. The main

thing is that the fortress has been erected and a draw is inevitable.

Another procedure which must be considered very typical is the creation of a fortress when a rook and a minor piece (or often just a rook on its own) oppose a queen. In isolation even the strongest piece is not able to do anything, and in such cases the aim of the fortress is to cut off the enemy king from the queen. As, for example, in the following case.



In the 6th game of the **Sokolov - Vaganian** Candidates Match, Minsk, 1985, White has merely insignificant drawing chances after the natural 43 . . . d2 44 Kf1 Nd4 45 Rxb4 Rc1+ 46 Kf2 d1=Q 47 Nxd1 Rxd1, when Black emerges with a piece for two pawns. But he was tempted by a greater material advantage.

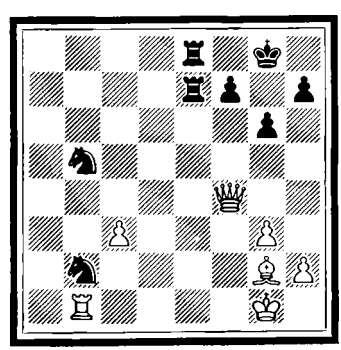
43 . . . Ke8?

With the threat after 44 . . . Kd7 and 45 . . . Re2 of winning the knight for the d-pawn alone. But White is able to save the game by force.

44 Nxc2! dxc2 45 Rxc6 b3 46 Kh2 b2 47 Rc8+ Ke7 48 Rc7+ Kf8 49 Rxc2 b1=Q 50 Rc8+ Ke7 51 e5

A fortress has arisen, which over the course of more than 30 moves Black was unable to take either by storm or siege. Draw.

R. Byrne - Taimanov
Interzonal Tournament,
Leningrad, 1973



White's advantage is so great that it would seem at first that the struggle should not last long. And the course of the game confirmed this dismal prognosis.

36 . . . Nd3
37 Qd2 Na3
38 Ra1 Re1+

To save the piece, Black is forced to exchange rooks.

39 Rxe1 Nxe1

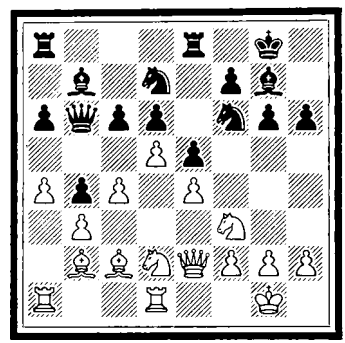
Or 39 . . . Rxe1+ 40 Bf1 Ne5 41 Kg2, and further losses for Black are inevitable.

40 Qd7 Re2 41 Bd5 Resigns.

But meanwhile, in the diagram position a miraculous saving resource was lurking very close. Leading to it was a forcing variation, at the end of which was a fortress approved of by theory, but, alas, somehow forgotten by Black:

36 . . . Nxc3! 37 Rxb2 Re1+! 38 Bf1 *(38 Kf2? Nd1+,* and only Black has winning chances) 38 . . . Ne2+ 39 Rxe2 R8xe2.

There is now the threat of . . . Rb2(c2)-b1(c1), winning the pinned bishop. It is true that it can be parried by 40 Qc4 (incidentally, the only move), but then — 40 . . . Rxf1+!! 41 Kxf1 Rxh2 42 g4 g5! (the tempting *42 . . . h5?* would have caused Black unnecessary difficulties after *43 Qc8+ Kg7 44 Qc3+ Kg8 45 Qg3 Rh1+ 46 Kg2* and *47 gxh5)* 43 Qc8+ Kg7 44 Qf5 Rh6 45 Qxg5+ Rg6, and by moving from g6 to e6 and back again, Black's rook prevents the white king from entering his territory.



Here in the game **Vitolinsh - Kozlov,** Yalta, 1975, White gained a promising position by a temporary pawn sacrifice:

18 c5 Nxc5 19 Nc4 Qc7 20 dxc6 Bxc6 21 Nxd6 Re6 22 Bxe5 Nfxe4 23 Ne8

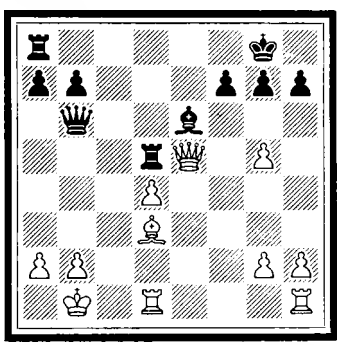
Has the time come to reap the dividends? Yes, had not Black in fact forced a general exchange, thereby obtaining an impregnable fortress.

23 . . . Qxe5! 24 Nxe5 Bxe5 25 Qc4 Raxe8 26 f3 Bxa1 27 fxe4 Bc3 28 Qxc5 Bxe4 29 Bxe4 Rxe4

The exchange of rooks is inevitable, after which the remaining black rook will take up position at e6 and it will be sufficient for the king

to move around the f7 pawn.

In the 3rd game of the **Hübner - Petrosian** Candidates Match, Seville, 1971, the outline of the fortress conceived by White was less obvious.



Despite his temporary material advantage, White has every reason to fear an attack on the queenside, for example after 20 Qe3 Ra5 21 a3 Qb3. Therefore he decides on a queen sacrifice.

20 Qe4! g6
21 Bc4!! Bf5
22 Bxd5 Bxe4+
23 Bxe4 Rd8

23 . . . Qe6 24 Bxb7 Rb8 25 Bf3 Qf5+ 26 Ka1 Qxg5 might perhaps have left some chances of continuing the struggle, although even here the position must be considered level. But now simplification leads to a fortress, the boundaries of which, it is true, are rather eroded.

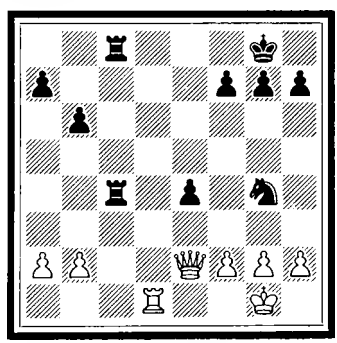
24 h4

The fortress is erected!

24 . . . Rxd4
25 Rxd4 Qxd4
26 Bxb7 Kf8
27 Bf3 Qf2

Here the players agreed a draw: there is nowhere for the black king to break through.

Black defended in analogous fashion in the correspondence game **Dubinin - Khasin,** 1970-72.



Although material is nominally equal, the advantage is nevertheless with White: he reckons, after safeguarding his king, on commencing active play. Therefore Black far-sightedly sets about erecting a fortress across the entire board.

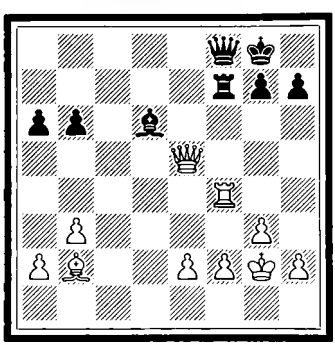
25 . . . h5! 26 h3 Nf6 27 Kh2 a5! 28 Rd2 R4c6 29 Qd1 Re6

30 Rd8+ Rxd8 31 Qxd8+ Ne8!

Ensuring the set-up . . . g6 and . . . Kg7. There is nowhere for White to break through. Draw.

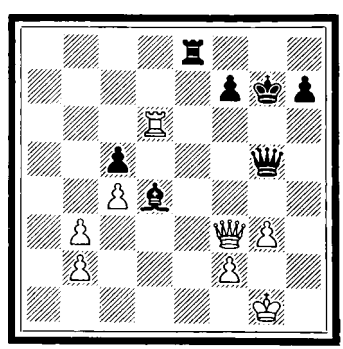
And here is an example where one of the participants in an elimination tournament for the Junior Championships of the World and Europe failed to avail himself of this method of defence.

Andrianov - Voitkevich
Sochi, 1980



After **29 Qd5 Bxf4 30 gxf4 Qc8,** with material equal the initiative is completely in Black's hands; in addition the endgame (31 . . . Qb7 is threatened) is in his favour. Meanwhile, in the diagram position White had the possibility of erecting a fortress in the variation 29 Rxf7! Qa8+ 30 Rf3 Bxe5 31 Bxe5 Qe4 32 Bf4! (preventing the immediate . . . g5) 32 . . . Qxe2 33 a4 Qe4 34 h3 followed by g3-g4, Kg3 and the release of the rook from the pin. And if Black plays 34 . . . h5, then after 35 Bg5 and 36 h4 White can even live with the pin: the black king is shut in, and moves with the bishop guarantee him against zugzwang.

Frequently a fortress is achieved with the help of a trap — this defensive procedure will be described later. This occurs when, in the heat of the battle, the stronger side forgets about the very existence of the fortress, but the weaker remembers and by a roundabout way 'steals through' into the fortress.



In the game **Kholmov - Stetsko,** Moscow, 1972, even three pawns would not be the equivalent of such a bishop. With its support the attack on f2 seems dangerous, and in

addition the b2 pawn, is 'hanging' . . . White resorts to a trap, as his last chance.

35 b4 Re5?!

The overture to a mistake . . .35 . . . Be5 was one way to win simply (but not *35 . . . Qc1+ 36 Kg2 Qxc4 37 Qg4+ Kh8 38 bxc5*, winning back the piece).

36 bxc5 Rf5?

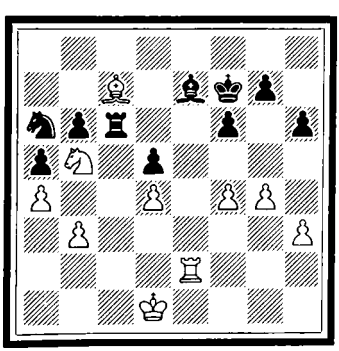
The mistake itself!

37 Qxf5! Qxf5

38 Rxd4 Qxc5
39 Rg4+ Kf6
40 Rh4

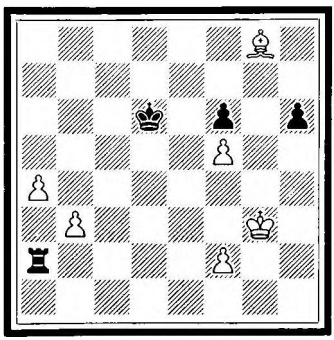
Draw agreed. White's task is merely to . . . get rid of his b- and c-pawns. It is not difficult to do this. And then his rook will ply between f4 and h4, not allowing the black king forward and not allowing the opponent an appropriate moment to sacrifice queen for rook and pawn.

What would you have played?



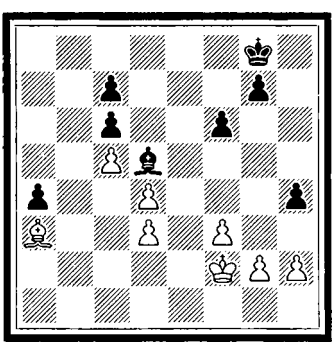
No. 27

Having sealed **43 Rc2** in this adjourned position, White was intending after 43 . . . Re6 44 f5! Re3 45 Bxb6 to obtain good prospects thanks to the activity of his pieces, both after 45 . . . Rxb3 and after 45 . . . Rxh3. Alas, Black found an antidote . . .



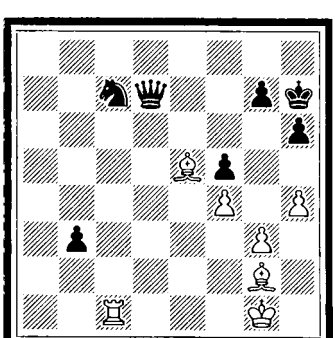
No. 28

Black undoubtedly has winning chances, but even so White could have offered a tenacious and not unsuccessful resistance. How?



No. 29

We will say straight away: White lost this position. Mainly because he incorrectly formulated his task. What should it have been?



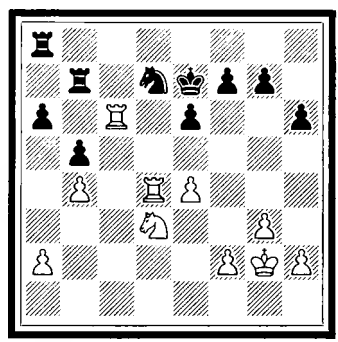
No. 30

To all appearances, the passed pawn will cost White a piece, and he will be left with a rook against a queen. So, should he resign?

10
Look out: a trap!

There is probably no chess player who, in a winning position, has not discovered to his horror that an imminent win has suddenly turned into a defeat or at best a draw. The cause of this is a trap. It can be defined as a manoeuvre, which at first sight gives definite advantages to the other side, but which in fact lures the opponent into a situation unfavourable for him.

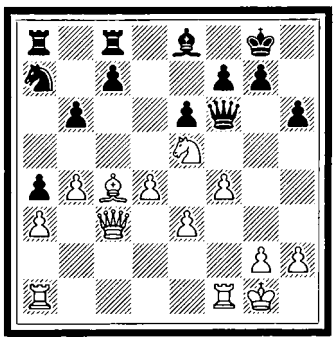
A trap normally reveals itself after an unexpected, unforeseen tactical blow. But in contrast to a combination, a trap does not force the opponent to make a definite reply, but leads to its goal only when the other side allows himself the luxury of making a mistake. Hence the following logical conclusion: if the defending side has a choice between a planned defence and setting a trap, the first decision will always be the correct one. Let the number and quality of the examples given below deter us, once and for all, from temptations of this type.



In the game **Schmidt - Pirc,** Nordvik, 1938, Black is cramped, but the calm 29 . . . Raa7 would have enabled him to maintain the balance both after 30 Rdd6 Nb8! 31 Rb6 Rxb6 Nd7 33 Rc6 a5, and in other variations. But he was tempted by a trap — **29 . . . Rb6?,** after which both 30 Rc7 Rd6 31 Rxd6 Kxd6 32 Rb7 Kc6 and **30 Rxd7+ Kxd7** 31 Rxb6 Kc7 are bad for White.

But in this last variation White found the intermediate move **31 Ne5+,** and Black resigned.

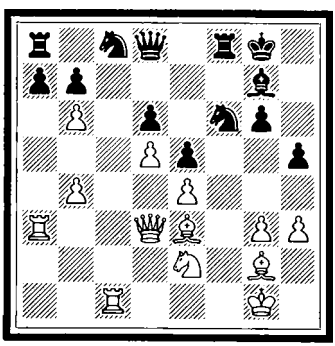
In the game **Capablanca - Mikenas,** Buenos Aires Olympiad, 1939, White holds the



initiative on the kingside and by **18 Qd3!** he prepares f4-f5.

This could have been prevented by 18 . . . g6, but Black devised a clever trap — **18 . . . Rd8 19 f5 b5** — and himself became its victim. Certainly, on 20 Ba2 he would have won by 20 . . . Qxe5, but . . .

20 fxe6! bxc4 21 Rxf6 cxd3 22 exf7+ Bxf7 (or 22 . . . Kf8 23 Ng6 mate) **23 Rxf7,** and White easily realized his material and positional advantage.



Black's position in the game **Zagoryansky - Kotov,** Leningrad, 1938, is undoubtedly worse, although there is nothing forcing for White after the normal 24 . . . Nxb6. Instead of this the future grandmaster tried to solve his defensive problems in a tactical-trappy way.

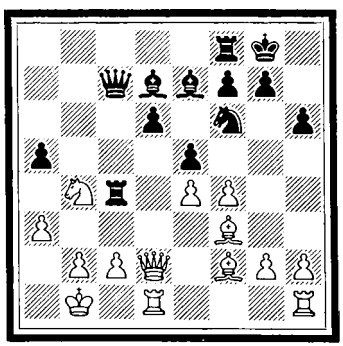
24 . . . Rf7?
25 bxa7 b6

After winning back the pawn Black will equalize, but the hunter is the one who is caught.

26 Qa6!

Now 26 . . . Rfxa7 loses to 27 Rxc8!, and 26 . . . Nxa7 to 27 Bxb6. The rest is forced.

26 . . . Rc7 27 Rxc7 Qxc7 28 Rc3 Qd7 29 b5 Bf8 30 Rxc8! Qxc8 31 Qxc8 Rxc8 32 Bxb6 Nd7 33 Bf2 Resigns.



In the game **Szabo-Lundin,** Groningen, 1946, White's

opening play has been sluggish, and although for the moment he is a pawn up, after the natural 22 Nd3 Nxe4 23 Bxe4 Rxe4 24 fxe5 dxe5 he would have incurred a slightly inferior position, but one still with plenty of resources.

Instead of this, the objectively strongest continuation, he resorted to a cunning, subtle and pretty trap.

22 b3

In the hope of 22 . . . Rxe4 23 Bxe4 Nxe4 24 Qe3 Nc3+ 25 Qxc3!! Qxc3 26 Nd5 and wins, since on the empty queenside the queen has nowhere to hide. But . . .

22 . . .	**axb4!**
23 bxc4	**Rb8**
24 Qd3	**Be6**
25 Be2	**Qb7!**

Black conducts the attack very subtly and does not hurry with the capture . . . bxa3, which would have allowed the white king to shelter securely behind the enemy pawn (see chapter 6).

26 axb4	**Nxe4**
27 Be1	**d5!**

Black's attack has grown greatly in strength and is now irresistible. After **28 c3** (28 cxd5 Bxb4 29 Qb3 Bxe1 30 Qxb7 Rxb7+ 31 Kc1 Bc3 32 dxe6, and White is mated by 32 . . . Bb2+ and 33 . . . Nc3) **28 . . . dxc4 29 Qc2 Bf5 30 Kc1 Ng3 31 Bxg3 Bxc2 32 Kxc2 exf4** Black easily won the game and . . . the first brilliancy prize. For at least the latter success in this game he was indebted to White's trappy method of defence.

Nevertheless, such an insult should not reduce the belief of the defending side in the power of the trap: only, we repeat, it should not become an end in itself.

As one of the elements of defence, a trap can sometimes enable Black to solve an opening problem. A convincing example is provided by the well known game **Fine - Yudovich,** Moscow, 1937.

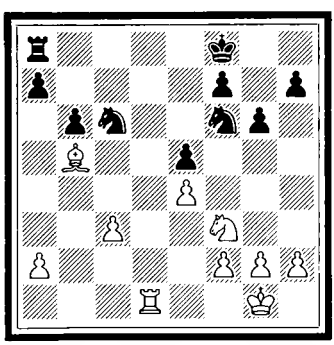
After the theoretical moves **1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Nf3 c5 5 Bg5 cxd4 6 Nxd4 e5** White, at the time one of the leading grandmasters in the world, played **7 Ndb5,** assuming that **7 . . . a6** was not possible because of **8 Nxd5 axb5 9 Nxf6+,** when after the natural 9 . . . gxf6 10 Qxd8+ followed by 11 Bxf6+ and 12 Bxh8 Black is the exchange and a couple of pawns down.

But a surprise awaited him.

9 . . . Qxf6! 10 Bxf6 Bb4+ 11 Qd2 Bxd2+ 12 Kxd2 gxf6, and

it was not necessary for White to play on a piece down.

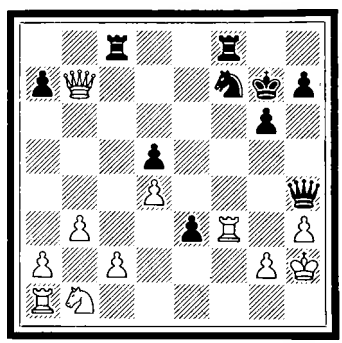
Nowadays competent players no longer have the right to fall for such variations — opening traps have been classified and recorded in chess primers and miniature games collections, and should be known to everyone. In the middlegame and endgame there is a countless number of traps, with some of which it is useful to become acquainted.



As far as can be recalled, the Yugoslav grandmaster Knezevic was very content with his position in the diagram, a fact which he briefly communicated to one of the authors. Indeed, after 22 ... Na5 23 Nxe5 Nxe4 24 Rd7 White's pieces become threateningly active. But ...

22 ... Rc8!
23 Rd6? Na5

And it transpired that the trap set by Black in the game **Knezevic-Tal,** Leningrad, 1977, had completely gained him the initiative. The knight cannot be taken — 24 Rxf6? Ke7, and the loss of a tempo on move 23 proves significant. After **24 Ba6 Rxc3 25 Nxe5 Nxe4 26 Rd7 Ke8 27 f3 Rc1+ 28 Bf1 Nc4!** White was unable to solve his defensive problems.



In the game **Nimzowitsch-Euwe,** Carlsbad, 1929, White, who is a pawn up, can ... with a clear conscience resign: Black has too many threats. But he tries his last chance.

23 Nc3!?

The chief enemy - Black's passed pawn - is stopped for the moment.

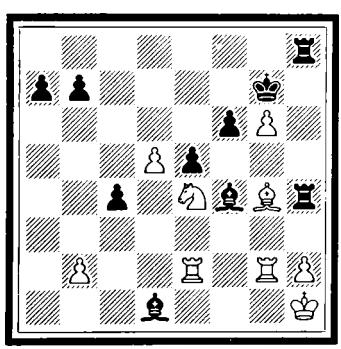
23 ... Rxc3?

A direct and fatal reaction

to a trap which, apart from the one stated, also contains a second point: to gain time for doubling rooks and for an attack. 23 . . . Qxd4 would have won easily after 24 Raf1 Qe5+ 25 Kh1 Rc7, or 24 Rxf7+ Rxf7 25 Qxc8 Qe5+ 26 Kg1 e2 27 Re1 Rf1+! 28 Rxf1 Qe3+.

24 Raf1 e2
25 Rxf7+ Rxf7
26 Qxf7+ Kh6
27 Qf8+

And in view of the variation 27 . . . Kg5 28 Qf6+ Kh5 29 g4+ Black resigned.



In the game **Tarasevich–Zlotnik,** Moscow, 1971, White's position is very difficult, and he quite justifiably plays for a trap.

33 Nd6 Bxe2
34 Nf5+ Kxg6?

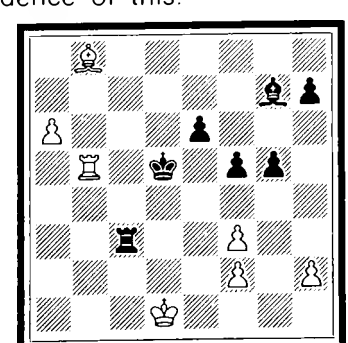
After this the trap snaps shut, whereas after 34 . . . Kg8 35 Nxh4 Rxh4! 36 Bxe2 Kg7 Black can hope to win, despite the opposite-colour bishops, since he can easily increase his material advantage.

35 Bh5+!! Kxh5

Alas, forced: if he takes the knight, Black's king is mated by the bishop from g6.

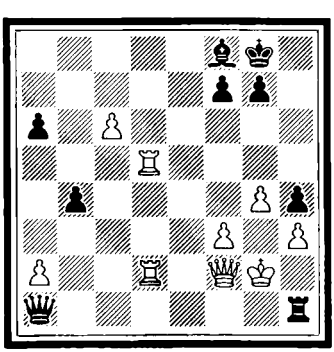
36 Ng7+, with a draw by perpetual check.

Experience shows that, in general, traps work more often when the stronger side's advantage is especially great. Psychologically this is quite understandable: the fate of the game seems decided, and at any moment the opponent will resign. For this reason, in very difficult or hopeless positions, as a last chance the possibility of setting a trap should never be disregarded. Here is evidence of this.



Here, in the game **Fischer-Euwe,** Leipzig Olympiad, 1960, Black played 'according to the rules': **32 . . . Kc4,** and after the forced **33 Rb7 Bd4 34 Rc7+ Kd3 35 Rxc3+ Kxc3 36 Be5** he resigned, since the white pawn queens. But . . .

"After the game Euwe showed me a cute trap he might have played for - and almost fainted when I fell into it! The line arises after 32 . . . Kc6 33 Ra5 Bd4 and he asked, "What do you do now?" I looked a few seconds and played 34 Be5? (after *34 a7 Bxa7 35 Rxa7 Rxf3 36 Rxh7 Rxf2* the win, if in general possible, is extremely difficult - *the authors)* whereupon he uncorked 34 . . . Rc5! which leads to a draw. Upon consideration, however, simply 34 Ke2 wins. It's these tidbits that you remember best" (Fischer).



In this cheerless position for Black the game **Bouaziz-Miles,** Interzonal Tournament, Riga, 1979, was adjourned. Indeed, White is the exchange up, the approaches to his king are securely defended, and within two moves the c-pawn will become a queen. Are any more grounds required for complacency.?

Nevertheless the game was resumed.

42 . . .	**Rc1**
43 Rc2	**Qb1**
44 Rdd2	**Rh1**

A move of desperation? After all White was threatening 45 Rxc1 Qxc1 46 Rc2 . . . No, a trap of astounding beauty!

45 c7?	**Rxh3!!**
46 Kxh3?	

Had White seen through his opponent's idea, he would have preferred to at least save half a point - 46 Qf1 Rg3+ 47 Kf2 Rxf3+ 48 Kxf3 Qxf1+ 49 Ke4, and Black does not have more than perpetual check.

46 . . .	**Qh1+**
47 Qh2	**Qxf3+**
48 Kxh4	**Be7+**
49 g5	

Well, what now?

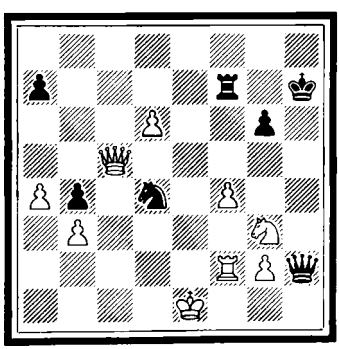
49 . . .	**Bxg5+!!**

White resigns. With a colossal material advantage he

nevertheless gets mated: 50 Kxg5 f6+ 51 Kh4 g5 mate or 51 Kg5 Qg4 mate.

Does this mean that after Black's 44th move there is no win for White? Of course, there is: 45 Rd8 Rxh3 (not now *45 . . . Rc1* because of *46 Rxf8+ Kxf8 47 Qc5+* and *48 Rxc1)* 46 Kxh3 Qh1+ 47 Qh2 Qxf3+ 48 Kxh4 Qf6+ 49 g5 Qxd8 50 Rd2.

Yes, it has happened on many occasions that premature relaxation has led even experienced masters and grandmasters into a snare set by a resourceful defender.



In the 3rd game of the **Taimanov–Botvinnik** USSR Championship Play-off Match, Moscow, 1952, there is no need to explain why Black's position is lost. But in analysis before the resumption he found a trap, based on geometric motifs, and used it as his last chance.

43 . . . Rxf4!?
44 Rxf4?

Expecting in reply the automatic 44 . . . Qxg3+ 45 Rf2 Qe3+ 46 Kf1 Qd3+ 47 Kg1 Ne2+ 48 Rxe2 Qxe2 49 Qd4 and wins, White did not even stop to consider the secret point of his opponent's desperate move. Otherwise he would have first given a check - 44 Qc7+, and only then taken the rook.

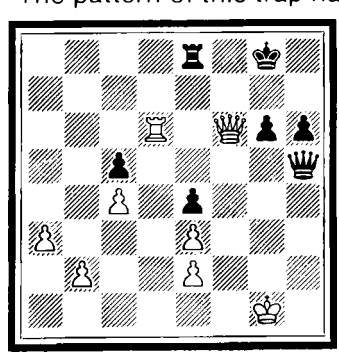
44 . . . Qg1+!

Creating an opposition of the queens which is fatal for White.

45 Nf1 Nf3+ 46 Rxf3 Qxc5 47 Rd3 Qf5! 48 Rd2 Qe6+!

The mobility of the lone black queen is exactly sufficient for a draw - **49 Kf2 Qf5+ 50 Ke2 Qg4+ 51 Kf2 Qf5+ 52 Kg1 Qc5+ 53 Kh2 Qh5+ 54 Kg1 Qc5+ 55 Kh1 Qc1!**

The pattern of this trap has



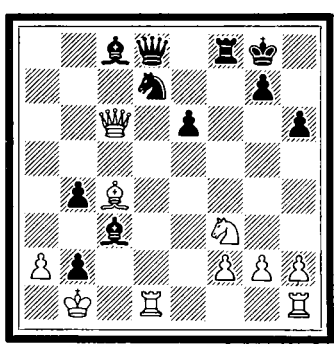
something in common with the finish to the game **Makogonov - Chekhover,** Tbilisi, 1937.

35 ... Qg4+

In his won position White did not see this as anything other than a 'spite' check, and he carelessly replied:

36 Kf2?? (36 Kf1 is of course correct) **36 ... Rf8 37 Rd8 Qh4+!**

Geometric motifs are put into effect, and White resigned.



Of course, in the 6th game of the **Timman-Yusupov** Candidates Match, Holland, 1985, Black is objectively lost. He is the exchange down, the pin on the d-file looks fatal, and it would appear that his pieces on the back rank are unable to exploit the fact that the white king is insufficiently defended. Nevertheless . . .

20 ... Kh8!

A brilliant trap, which is revealed in the variation 21 Bxe6 Qf6 22 Bxd7 Qf5+!!, mating the white king with a queen sacrifice. True, White did not fall into it, but he was tempted by a different possibility - that of beginning an attack along the b1-h7 diagonal (after the correct *21 Rd6!*, with the threats of *22 Rhd1* and *22 Rxe6*, he would still have been winning).

21 Qe4 Qc7!
22 Nh4 Ne5!

On 22 . . . Nf6 White would have won by 23 Ng6+ Kg8 24 Bxe6+. But now his bishop is attacked, and in addition 23 . . . Bb7 is threatened.

23 Bd3 Nxd3
24 Ng6+ Kg8
25 Rxd3

25 Nxf8 did not work because of 25 . . . Nc5! 26 Qf3 Bb7, when Black wins. But here too, after establishing nominal material equality, he gains a decisive advantage.

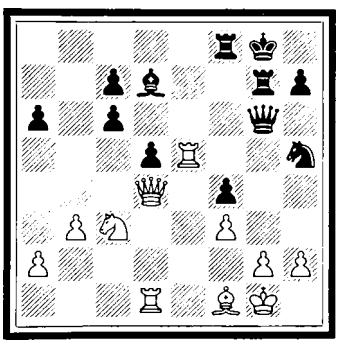
25 ... Rxf2
26 Rf2 Rxf3
27 gxf3 Qd6!

By preventing 28 Rd1 and threatening mate - 28 . . . Bb7 29 Qxb7 Qd3, Black wins.

28 Qc2 e5 29 Nh4 Be6 30 Rd1 Bd4 31 Qa4 Qd8 32 Qc6

Bd5 33 Rxd4 exd4 34 Qb5 Qa8

Four moves later White resigned.



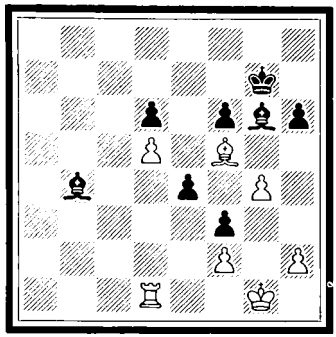
In the game **Platonov - I. Zaitsev,** 38th USSR Championship, Riga, 1970, White has achieved a great positional advantage for a pawn, but, failing to grasp certain geometric motifs, he set about winning material, thereby falling into a trap.

25	**Nxd5?**	**cxd5**
26	**Qxd5+**	**Kh8**
27	**Rxh5**	**Bc6!**
28	**Qe5**	**Bxf3**

Virtually all White's heavy artillery is attacked, and he soon capitulated.

A rare type of trap was seen in the game **Ivanov-Dolmatov,** Novosibirsk, 1976.

It is clear that Black is



losing. He tries his last chance:

38	**...**	**h5!**
39	**Rd4**	**e3!**
40	**Rxb4?**	

"Beware of Greeks, bearing gifts". The less mercenary 40 fxe3 would have won, whereas now . . .

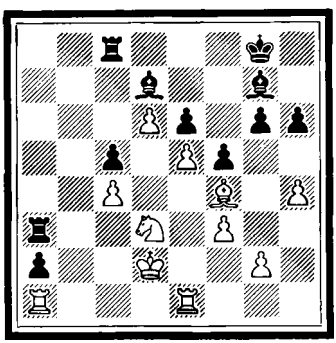
40	**...**	**e2**
41	**Re4**	**Bxf5**
42	**gxf5**	**h4!**

The white king is shut in its own residence, and the rook is tied to the e-file. Draw.

Even so, to be fair it should be said that it is not always possible to catch the opponent in even a well camouflaged net. Sometimes this is the fault of the 'hunter' himself.

The 5th game of the **Karpov -Kasparov** World Championship Return Match, London/ Leningrad, 1986, is strateg-

ically decided: both of the World Champion's bishops are condemned to inactivity, his a2 and c5 pawns provide targets for attack, and it is impossible to maintain material equality. There are practically no chances in tactical complications, unless they contain . . . a trap.



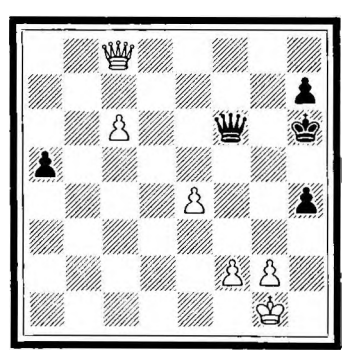
Kasparov's next move is therefore quite justified.

25	**. . .**	**g5!?**
26	**hxg5**	**hxg5**
27	**Bxg5**	**Kf7?**

Equivalent to resignation. Having made the first step, Black stops half way, whereas he should have tried setting an unusually pretty and well camouflaged trap - 27 . . . Rb8, and if 28 Bf4, then 28 . . . Rbb3 29 Nxc5 Rb2+ 30 Kc1 Rxg2. Now the immediate 31 Nxd7? gives Black perpetual check - 31 . . . Rc3+ 32 Kd1 Rd3+, while on the natural 31 Bd2 he has the totally unexpected 31 . . . Bh6!! 32 Bxh6 Rc3+ 33 Kd1 Rd3+!! 34 Nxd3 Ba4+, when despite his enormous superiority in force, White's king cannot avoid perpetual check.

It stands to reason that such a development of events is not obligatory, and Karpov might well have found the refutation - 28 Ke2! Rbb3 29 Nxc5 Rb2+ 30 Kf1 and wins. But it still should have been tried, since after the move in the game Black loses essentially without a struggle.

28	**Bf4**	**Bc6**
29	**Rec1**	**Rb8**
30	**Rc3**	**Ra5**
31	**Rc2**	**Rba8**
32	**Nc1**	**Resigns.**



Sometimes a trap does not work because the game . . . is adjourned, and thorough analysis with a considerable outlay of time enables it to be

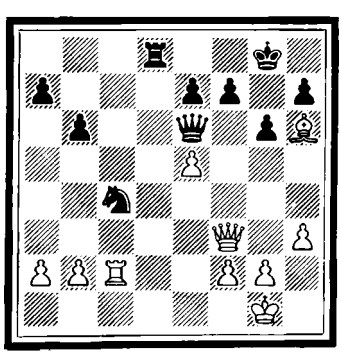
discovered. This is what happened, for example, in the game **Geller-Simagin,** 28th USSR Championship, Moscow, 1961.

44 . . . a4!

With a devilish idea - 45 c7 a3 46 e5 (to answer *46 . . . Qxe5* with *47 Qa6+;* weaker is *46 Qa8 Qa1+ 47 Kh2 Qe5+ 48 Kh3 Qe6+ 49 Kxh4 Qxe4+ 50 Kh3 Qf5+* etc.) 46 . . . a2! 47 exf6 a1=Q+ 48 Kh2 Qe5+ 49 Kh3 Qf5+ 50 Qxf5 - stalemate!

White saw through the trap and avoided it - **45 e5! Qxe5 46 c7,** when in view of the threat of 47 Qa6+ the white pawn promoted to a queen.

Does this mean that the effort spent on constructing traps is pointless? Judge for yourself.



The position bears the characteristic features of White having been attacking: his bishop has penetrated to h6, and one of his pawns has crossed the demarcation line. But it has now become a target for a counteroffensive, and White defended it in a rather unexpected way - **22 Qe4.** It is clear that after 22 . . . Nxe5 23 Rc7 White has quite sufficient compensation (incidentally, Black's move entails an interesting trap; on *23 f4?* he replies not with *23 . . . Rd1+24 Kf2 Ng4+ 25 hxg4!,* when after taking the queen he is mated, but with the immediate *23 . . . Ng4!,* winning), but why not take the pawn with the queen - 22 . . . Qxe5? After all, in view of the mate threat, isn't the knight immune? . .

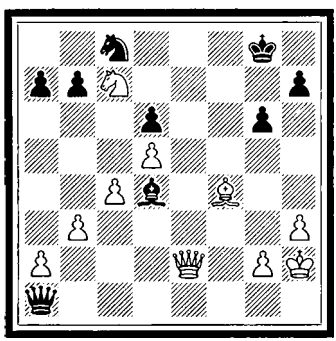
Because, in the game **Keres -Tal,** Parnu, 1971, White had prepared the pretty and cuning 23 Rd2!! Now 23 . . . Nxd2 leaves the queen en prise, 23 . . . Qxe4 allows mate, and 23 . . . Rc8 or 23 . . . Qc7 loses the knight to 24 Qxc4, diverting the defender of the 8th rank.

Black avoided the trap - **22 . . . b5,** but it nevertheless allowed White to maintain material equality - **23 b3 Qxe5** (now this is possible - on 24 Rd2?? Black can interpose 24 . . . Qa1+) **24 Qxe5 Nxe5**

25 Rc7 f6 26 Rxe7 Rd7 and even to obtain slightly the better ending, which, however, was insufficient for a win.

Geller-Tal

Moscow, 1975



Black has just lost a pawn, but his difficulties lie more in the open position of his king (mate in a few moves is threatened - *31 Qe8+ Kg7 32 Ne6+* etc.). But suddenly the off-side black knight comes into play.

30 . . . Ne7!

Why note take it - 31 Qxe7? After all, the maximum that Black can achieve would appear to be a series of checks - 31 . . . Qg1+ 32 Kg3 Qf2+ 33 Kg4 Qxg2+ 34 Bg3 h5+ 35 Kh4.

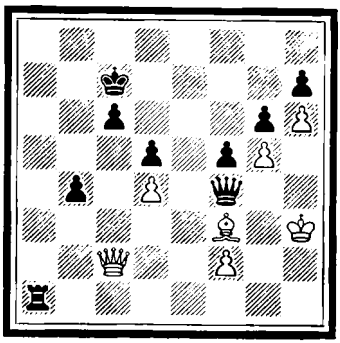
There would appear to be no more checks, but it turns out that there is the highly cunning 35 . . . Qe4+!! 36 Qxe4 Bf6 mate! A trap, into which it would not be shameful to fall.

Nevertheless White saw through it, replied **31 Nb5,** and now after 31 . . . Qg1+ 32 Kg3 Nf5+ the struggle would have flared up with the new strength. The series of time trouble mistakes - **31 . . . Bg1+? 32 Kg3 Nh4+? 34 Kg4 Nf5** etc. - which led to Black's defeat, do not relate to our theme.

The theme of a trap can also be the transition into a drawn ending, the fortress - we have already discussed this - and one more very significant possibility, for which see the following chapter.

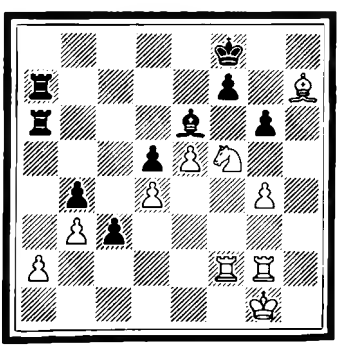
What would you have played?

No. 31



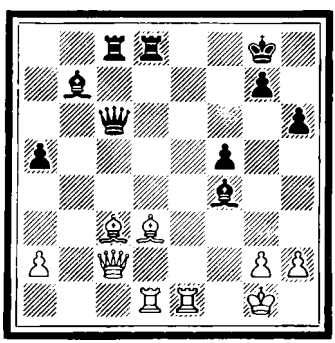
White's defeat seems inevitable, but by **37 Qe2** he set up a trap. What was it?

No. 32



White is a piece up, but the game is far from decided, since her bishop is shut in and after the withdrawal of the knight it will be immediately attacked by the king. It would be good to bring the white king into play, but on **46 Kh2** - as in fact occurred in the game - Black had prepared a trap, based (let this be a slight prompt) on geometric motifs. . .

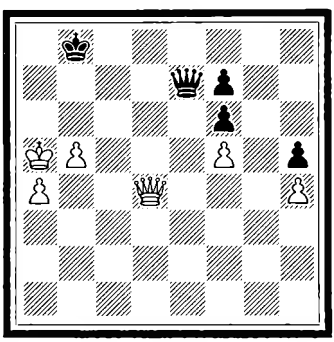
No. 33



With his last move White has prepared to win back his pawn, by taking on f5 or a5. But since the variation **28 . . . Qxc3** with the seemingly forced 29 Qxc3 Rxc3 30 Bc4+ Rxc4 31 Rxd8+ Kh7 leaves Black with two bishops for a rook, he happily went in for it. And yet? . . .

11
In search of stalemate

Let us immediately begin with an example.

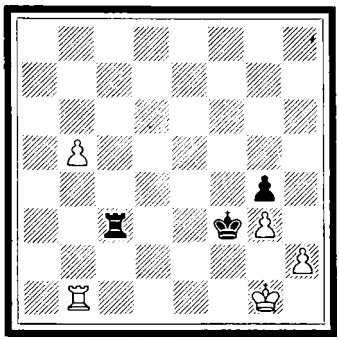


The win for White lies through the exchange of queens, and if need be, even with the sacrifice of one of his queenside pawns. And when in **Chigorin-Schlechter,** Ostende, 1905, Black gave a so-called spite check - **44 . . . Qc7+,** White did not see anything tricky in it. He offered the exchange - **45 Qb6+??,** but after **45 . . . Ka8!** he was forced to agree to a draw in view of either stalemate (46 Qxc7) or perpetual attack (46 Ka6 Qc8+ 47 Ka5 Qc7). The simple 45 b6 Qe7 46 Qc4 would have immediately won, since the check on c7 with the desired exchange can merely be delayed by Black, but not averted.

Here we come to another trustworthy and eternal weapon of the defending side. An extensive and truly inexhaustible theme for traps is provided by the somewhat paradoxical chess rule of stalemate. In life and in other logical games it has no analogy: if a military commander is surrounded, he dies or surrenders, if on the draughts board the opponent's man is shut in - this means victory. But in chess . . . The absence of any move for the weaker side gives him life - and how many pitfalls and mined squares have been constructed by the defending side in search of stalemate. Normally the play is of a purely trappy nature.

Schlechter-Wolf
Nuremberg, 1906

The author of the previous trap himself falls into a snare.



54 . . . Re3!?

From the viewpoint of the battle against the chief enemy - the passed b-pawn - this move is pointless, and White should have stopped to think. . .

55 b6?? Re1+!

This leads to stalemate, whereas the interposition of 55 Rf1+ would have immediately decided the game.

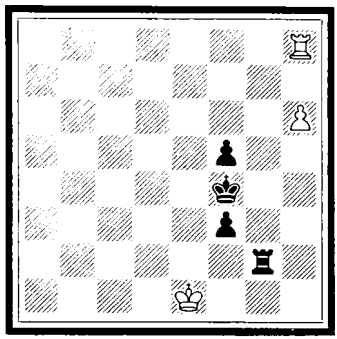
And now - an even worse example: in the game **Znosko-Borovsky** *v* **Salwe,** Ostende, 1907, the stronger side himself brought into existence a stalemating possibility.

See next diagram

46 . . . Ra2?

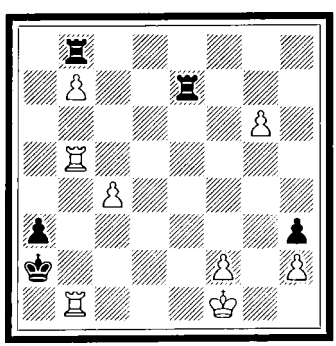
Mechanically Black places the rook as far away as possible, and this is what results.

47 h7 f2+ 48 Kf1 Kf3 49 Ra8! Rxa8 50 h8=Q!



Had Black's rook gone to b2 or c2 on move 46, instead of capturing the new-born queen he could have given mate on the 1st rank. But as it is, the a1 square is controlled, and therefore: **50 . . . Rxh8** - stalemate!

Kargol-Rickers
West Germany, 1974



By **44 . . . Rbe8** Black set a trap based on the restriction of his own king, and White fell into it.

45 b8=Q? Rxb8!

In order to achieve stalemate after 46 Rxb8 Re1+!

46 Ra1+ Kxa1
47 Rxb8 a2

Again stalemating his own king.

48 f4!

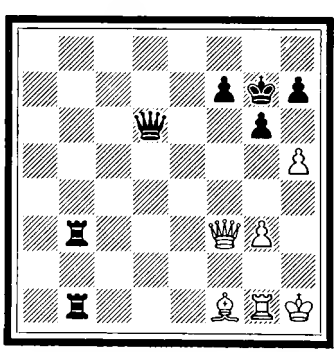
The black rook is 'innoculated' against being a 'desperado': 48 . . . Re1+ 49 Kf2 Re2+ 50 Kf3! Re3+ 51 Kg4, and 51 . . . Rg3+ fails to 52 hxg3 h2 53 Rh8 Kb1 54 Rxh2 a1=Q 55 Rh1+.

48 . . . Rf7!

If not from one side, then from the other.

49 Ke2 Rxf4 50 g7 Re4+ 51 Kd3 Rd4+!

The rook cannot be avoided. After its capture it is stalemate.



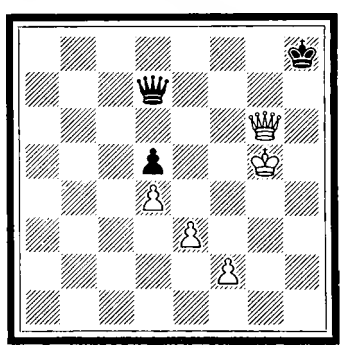
In the game **Polyak-Kogan,** Rostov-on-Don, 1937, White should long since have resigned, but perhaps, with the queens on, something is still possible?

32 Qa8 Rxg3
33 Rxg3 Qxg3?

Such carelessness! After 33 . . . Rxf1+ it is easy to see that Black could have exchanged rooks and with checks picked up the last white pawn . . .

34 Qa1+!!

A bolt from the blue. On 34 . . . Rxa1 there follows 35 h6+ with stalemate, but in the game after 34 . . . Kf8 35 Qxb1 Qh4+ Black was unable to demonstrate that in the given case three pawns are stronger than a bishop.



In the game **Portisch-Lengyel,** Malaga, 1964, it was sufficient for White merely to remember the stalemate rule and give some minimum freedom to the black king (e.g. *37 Qf6+ Kg8 38 Kf4* etc.). But. . .

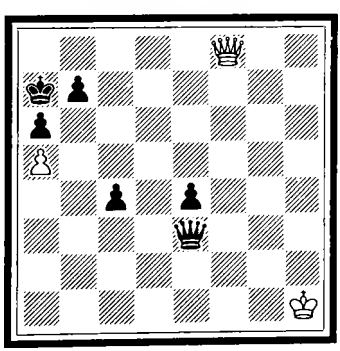
37 f4? Qg4+!

And the 'desperado' black queen overtakes the white king everywhere. On 38 Kf6 there follows 38 . . . Qe6+!, and 38 Kh6 allows the especially pretty 38 . . . Qg5+!

It is a fact that even the strongest grandmasters in the world keep on overlooking this paradoxical situation - stalemate. But even among them the record holder is Samuel Reshevsky. We have already seen one of his 'stalemating variations' in his game with Geller (p.xv). But in chess literature it has already been pointed out that every 11 years (!!) the American grandmaster falls into such a trap.

Pilnik-Reshevsky

USA Championship, 1942

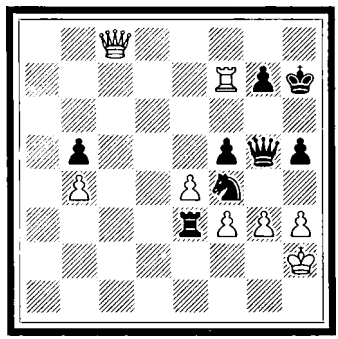


49 Qf2!!

Draw agreed - stalemate!

Evans-Reshevsky

USA Championship, 1964



The black knight cannot be taken because of mate in two moves, and White resorts to his last chance.

47 h4 Re2+
48 Kh1 Qxg3??

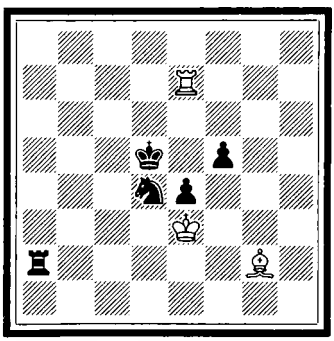
Need it be said that after 48 . . .Qg6 49 Rf8 Qe6 White would have been left with only one spite check? But now he has any number of checks!

49 Qg8+!! Kxg8
50 Rxg7+!

Draw agreed - stalemate, since in the event of 50 . . . Kf8 White, naturally, does not take the queen, but continues checking with his rook along the 7th rank.

And so, 1942, 1953, 1964 . . . True, neither in 1975 nor in 1986 did Reshevsky increase this collection of stalemate curiosities. . .

Lisitsyn-Bonderevsky
Leningrad, 1950



Black has a great advantage, and the win would have been not far off, had it not been for. . .

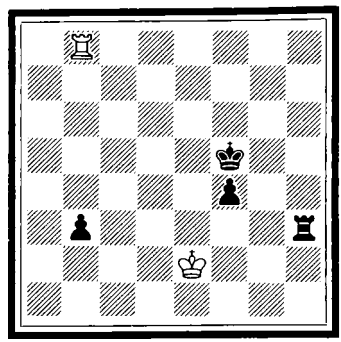
43 Bxe4+!! fxe4
44 Re5+!!

After the capture of the rook, on an empty board the white king has no moves, while in the event of 44 . . . Kd6 45 Rxe4 Black's advantage is insufficient for a win.

Something similar occurred in the following, even simpler position.

Bernstein-Smyslov
Groningen, 1946

Black can win 'as he pleases' (for example, *58 . . . Re3+* and, depending on which way the white king moves, he can take his own king either to f3, or to c2), only not in the way chosen in



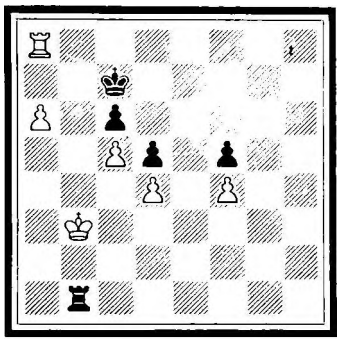
the game.

58 . . . b2?
59 Rxb2! Rh2+
60 Kf3

Because of stalemate the rook is immune, and with only one extra pawn the ending cannot be won.

To some, these stalemating motifs in defence may seem accidental, but . . . Great masters of chess, on noticing the possibility of a stalemate situation in perhaps one variation, will sometimes base on this an entire system of defence. This is what happened, for example, in the 20th game of the **Tal-Botvinnik** World Championship Return Match, Moscow, 1961.

"The general opinion was that the adjourned position was hopeless for Black", Botvinnik later recalled. "A second successive sleepless night, and by morning the main and most obvious threat



had been neutralized by an unexpected stalemate possibility"...

White's main threat is to win the f5 pawn at the cost of his a-pawn, which will divert the black king to the kingside, and then to break through with his own king on the queenside.

The entire plan would have been feasible, had it not been for... However, let us see.

89 Ka2 Rb5
90 a7 Ra5+

Necessary, otherwise the pawn ending will be lost after 90 ... Kb7? 91 Rb8+.

91 Kb3 Kb7
92 Rf8 Rb5+!

A brilliant overture! The point of Black's entire idea becomes clear within four moves.

93 Ka4

White does not yet suspect anything, otherwise he would have rejected the second part of his plan and reconciled himself to 93 Kc3. However, this would have been an achievement for Black: "less active play on the part of White would have left Black with hopes of a draw" Botvinnik).

93 ... Kxa7
94 Rxf5 Rb1
95 Rf6

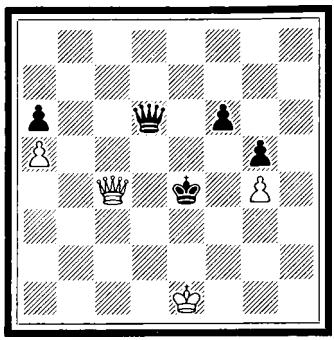
White sees through the trap: the apparently winning 95 Rf7+ Ka6 96 Rc7 runs into 96 ... Rb4+!!, when he can avoid stalemate only at the cost of his pawns. But now his basic plan is unrealizable, since the black rook manages to expel the enemy king from the queenside, and it is unable to break through.

95 ... Kb7 96 f5 Ra1+ 97 Kb4 Rb1+ 98 Kc3 Rc1+ 99 Kd2 Rf1 100 Ke3 Kc7 101 Rf7+ Kd8 102 Ke2 Rf4 103 Kd3 Rf3+ 104 Kd2 Kc8 105 Ke2 Rf4

For a further 16 moves White attempted to realize his extra pawn, but in vain. Draw.

But some years later fate gained its revenge...

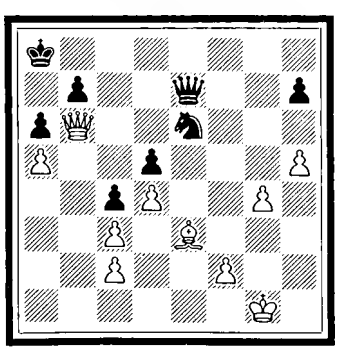
In the third-round game **Matulovic-Botvinnik** from the 'Match of the Century', Belgrade, 1970, after lengthy manoeuvring Black has



broken through with his king into the opponent's territory and now after 92 . . . Ke3 he would have had a straightforward win *(93 Qc3+ Qd3 94 Qc5+ Kf3,* picking up the g4 pawn in return for the f6 pawn and exchanging queens). But as a result of **92 . . . Kf3?,** as played, it was White who had a straightforward draw with **93 Qd3+!,** and after the capture of the queen - stalemate!

Bannik-Ivkov

USSR *v* Yugoslavia, Rijeka, 1963



White has a great material advantage, but the battle is not yet over.

33 . . . h6
34 Bxh6?

White should not have been tempted by the pawn. 34 Kg2 was much more logical, consolidating somewhat his forces on the kingside and threatening to activate the queen after 35 Qb4.

34 . . . Nf4!!
35 Bxf4

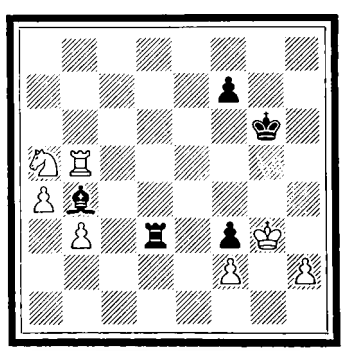
Otherwise White will have to seek perpetual check (both *35 . . . Qe1+ and 35 . . . Qe4* were 'on the agenda').

35 . . . Qe1+
36 Kg2 Qh1+!!

Here too - a 'desperado' queen!

37 Kg3 Qh3+!

Stalemate is inevitable.



And, of course, in the 17th game of the **Spassky-Petro-**

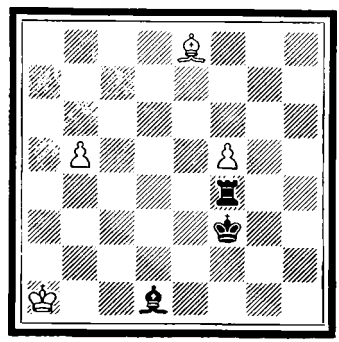
sian World Championship Match, 1969, during the adjournment session Black was simply obliged to try for stalemate, since in the diagram position he lost without a fight after the undistinguished **49 . . . Bxa5 50 Rxa5 Rxb3 51 Ra8:** one white pawn advances to a7, the other to h6, and in the resulting zugzwang situation White picks up both black pawns on the f-file and advances his third passed pawn to the queening square.

Black's chance lay in the variation 49 . . . Bd6+ 50 Kg4 f5+! (but not *50 . . . Bxh2 51 Rg5+ Kf6 52 Rf5+* and *53 Rxf3)* 51 Kh3 Bc7 52 Nc4 Bf4 53 Ne5+ (this is tempting, but it probably throws away the win; stronger is *53 Ne3! Bxe3 54 fxe3 Rxe3 55 Kg3* etc.) 53 . . . Bxe5 54 Rxe5 Rxb3 55 Re3 Rb4 56 Re6+ (no better is *56 Ra3 Rg4! 57 a5 Kg5 58 Rxf3 Ra4* with a draw) 56 . . . Kg5 57 a5 Rg4! 58 a6 Kf4! 59 a7 Rh4+! 60 Kxh4 - stalemate.

An any rate, it was worth trying for such an outcome.

And in conclusion - a study demonstrating truly inexhaustible stalemate motifs.

Kaminer, 1931



The white king is as free as a bird, so what is the point? The 'normal' 1 Bh5+ Ke3 2 Bxd1 would be ruinous for White because of the pin 2 . . . Rf1, when the rook easily eliminates all three of the opponent's men.

Therefore -

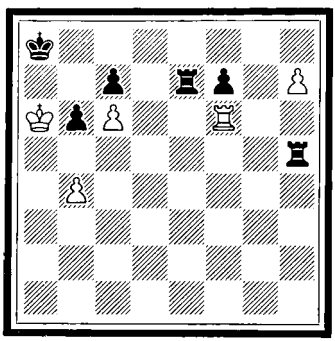
1 b6! **Ba4**

If 1 . . . Rb4, then 2 f6! Rxb6 and only now 3 Bh5+ with a theoretical draw.

2 b7 Rb4 3 f6! Bxe8 4 f7 Bxf7 5 b8=Q Rxb8

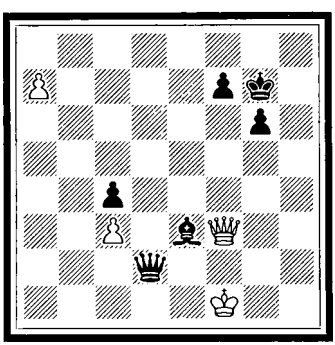
And amazingly, the white king does not have a single square. . .

What would you have played?



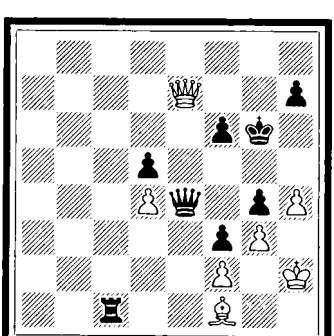
No. 34

White's pawn has been stopped one step from the finish, and he is a rook down. . Are all his chances exhausted?



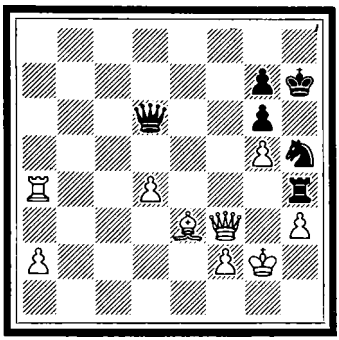
No. 35

The white pawn is ready to become a queen, but how nevertheless should Black not play?



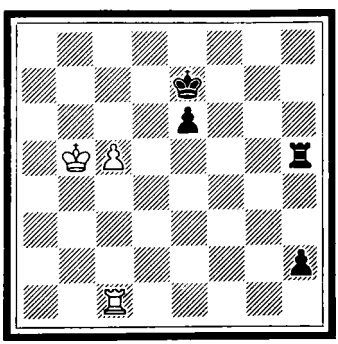
No. 36

Black's enormous material advantage and the perfectly secure position of his king forces White not so much to hope, as to dream of a draw. .



No. 37

Even with an enormous material advantage it is tempting to give mate along the 8th rank. And this is what White set about doing - **40 Ra8...**



No. 38

Even if it is White's move, is it really worth him continuing to resist in such a hopeless position?

12
It is never too late to resign!

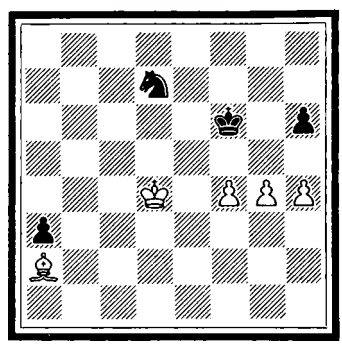
No, this is by no means a call for the breaking of sporting ethics, when one chess player in an obsolutely hopeless position continues a pointless resistance, showing a clear lack of respect both for himself and his opponent. A player should also be able to lose - with dignity and at the right time, but... It is to Napoleon that the words "No battle was ever won by capitulation" are attributed, but even if the great commander did not utter them, even so such a thought is justified.

And therefore before you stop the clocks and hold out your hand to your opponent, look round the board once more again, and ponder over the position. Because dozens and even hundreds of times - who can make an accurate count?! - even well known masters and grandmasters have resigned at a point when it was time to conclude peace, or even to chalk up a point in their column in the tournament table.

We realize that this is hard to believe, but facts are indisputable.

Vukovic-Iovcic

Yugoslavia, 1956



In a game resembling the cavalry battles of the times of that same Napoleon, when one side's forces got mixed up with the enemy and blow answered blow, White won a pawn and... conducted the endgame rather carelessly. But Black's defence is still up to the mark...

35 ... h5!
36 g5+

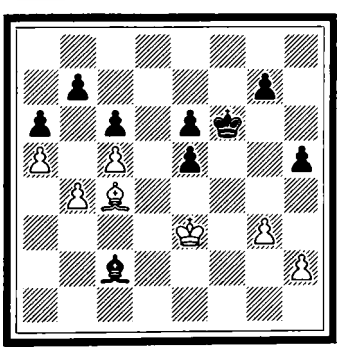
36 gxh5 would have guaranteed the weaker side a draw: the white bishop is of the 'wrong' colour for the h8 corner square.

36 . . . Kf5 37 Ke3 Kg4 38 g6 Nf6 39 g7 Kxh4 40 g8=Q Nxg8 41 Bxg8

The game could have been adjourned, but Black. . . resigned. In a drawn position! Naturally, the direct 41 . . . Kg4? loses to 42 Be6+ Kg3 43 f5 h4 44 f6 h3 45 f7 h2 46 f8=Q h1=Q 47 Qf4+ Kg2 48 Qf2 mate, but the elementary 41 . . . Kg3! would have put White in an unusual zugzwang position - 42 f5 Kg4 43 f6 Kg5 44 f7 a2, or 42 Bd5 h4 43 f5 h3 44 f6 h2 45 f7 h1=Q!, and after 46 Bxh1 a2 47 f8=Q a=Q a mating net cannot be woven.

Alatortsev-Leikin

Moscow Championship, 1937



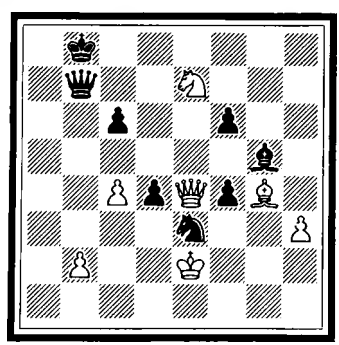
Despite being two pawns down, White is the only side trying to win.

31 b5? cxb5
32 Bxb5

And Black. . . resigned, after working out the variation 32 . . . Bb3? 33 c6 bxc6 34 Bxa6 Ke7 *(34 . . . Bd5 35 Bb7 Ke7 36 a6)* 35 Be2 Kd6 36 Bxh5, when the passed pawns on both wings ensure White a win.

Meanwhile 32 . . . axb5! 33 c6 bxc6 34 a6 b4 35 a7 b3 36 a8=Q *(36 Kd2 Be4 37 a8=Q b2)* 36 . . . b2 37 Qf8+ Kg6 38 Qe8+ Kh6 39 Qxe6+ Bg6 would have forced capitulation by . . . White.

But the ultimate record would appear to have been established in the game **Krejcik-Schwarz,** Austria, 1906.



1 Nxc6+ Kc7
2 Qe7+ Kb6

Now White could have won by the simple 3 Qxb7+ Kxb7 4 Bf3, and since for the moment the c4 pawn is 'poisoned' *(4 . . . Nxc4 5 Ne5+)*, he picks up the d4 pawn, which ensures a win even in the event of the

exchange of knights and the retention of opposite-colour bishops!

But White carried out a combination, which was rewarded with a brilliancy prize.

3 c5+ Ka6
4 Bc8(??)

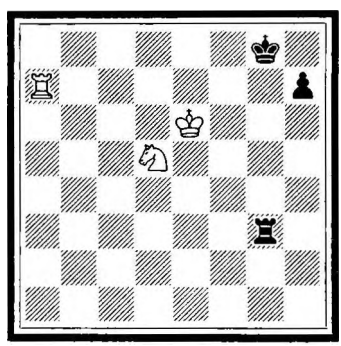
It was not yet too late to exchange queens and win the ending.

4 . . . Qxc8 5 Qa7+ Kb5 6 Qb6+ Kc4 7 Qb4+ Kd5 8 Ne7+, and Black resigned, since he loses his queen.

Alas, what the prize was awarded for was anti- brilliance, and Krejcik himself established this 50 years(!!) later. At the moment of capitulation there was a forced win for. . . Black; 8 . . . Ke4 9 Nxc8 f3+ 10 Kf2 (the only square, otherwise the white queen is lost) 10 . . . Bh4+ 11 Kg1 f2+ 12 Kh2 f1=Q 13 Nd6+ Ke5 14 Nf7+ Kf5 15 Nd6+ Kg6 and White has a choice: to resign, a piece down, or to be mated in 3 moves - 16 Qb7 Qf2+ 17 Kh1 Qe1+ 18 Kh2 Bg3 mate.

In the given instance Black could have been saved by counterattack. And in general it can be said that these practical examples, as well as many others, demonstrate that a fluent and fundamental mastery of all the defensive procedures examined above would have saved many players from an untimely and, (the main point) unmerited capitulation. For example:

Fleeing with the king



In the game **Yudovich-Bebchuk,** Moscow Championship, 1964, the black king is restricted. Mate is threatened - 48 Nf6+ Kh8 *(48 . . . Kf8 49 Rf7 mate)* 49 Rxh7 mate, and defending h7 *(47 . . . Rh3)* merely delays the end for one move - 49 Kf7 with the unavoidable 50 Ra8 mate.

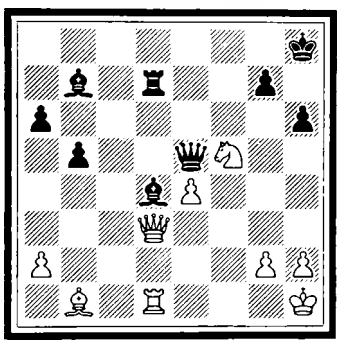
Black therefore resigned, forgetting that apart from defending h7 there was also the possibility of fleeing with the king. After 47 . . . Kf8! the white knight goes to f6 without check, and in reply the black rook can immediately begin attacking the

enemy king. Or if 48 Rf7+ *(48 Rxh7 Rg1)* 48 . . . Ke8 49 Nf6+ Kd8 the black king finds freedom.

Breaking the pin

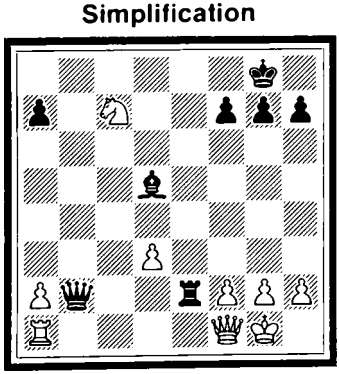
Popiel-Marco

Monte Carlo, 1902



Instead of getting into a panic and resigning, Black could have. . . won: 37 . . . Bg1!! would have broken the pin and, thanks to the mate threat at h2, enabled him to win the white queen!

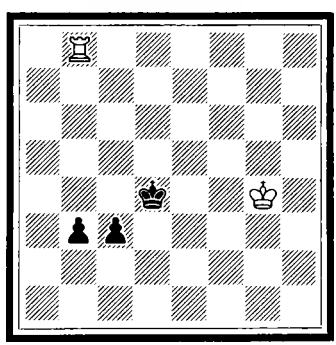
Simplification



In the game **Strekalovsky-Rudenko,** Moscow, 1961, White played **31 Rb1** (there is an obvious in the variation 31 Nxd5 Rxf2 32 Qe1 Re2!, but not 32 . . . Rxg2+ 33 Kf1 and White wins) and . . . accepted the capitulation of his opponent. Instead Black could have achieved saving simplification by 31 . . . Bxa2! 32 Rxb2 Rxb2, since there is no defence against 33 . . . Rb1.

Fridshtein-Lutikov

Riga, 1954

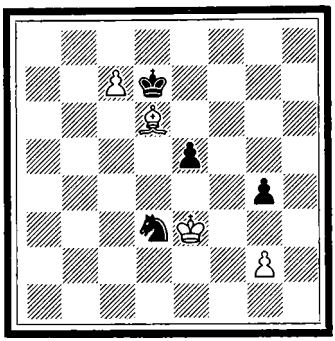


White's problem is to give up his rook for both the far-advanced pawns. The direct 60 Rxb3 does not succeed - 60 . . . c2 61 Rb4+ Kd5 62 Rb5+ Kd6 63 Rb6+ Kc7, and there are no more checks, nor is there any defence against the queening of the pawn.

And White . . . resigned, instead of interposing 60 Rb4+ and immediately forc-

ing a draw: 60 . . . Kd3 *(60 . . . Kd5 61 Rxb3 c2?? 62 Rc3)* 62 Rxb3.

Returning to the Middle Ages

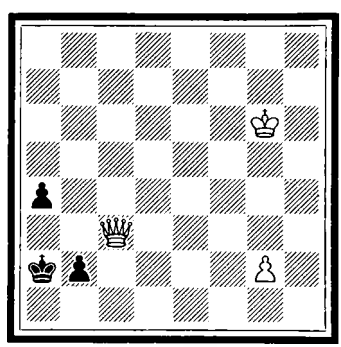


In this position the game **Keres-Lengyel,** Luhacovice, 1969, was adjourned(!), and on the basis of the variation 58 . . . Nf4 59 g3 Nd5+ 60 Ke4 Nf6+ 61 Kf5! *(61 Kxe5? Ne8* with a draw) Black resigned without resuming.

Meanwhile, as was later shown by Dvoretsky, the position is completely drawn, since without particular difficulty Black can construct an unusual type of fortress. This is achieved by 58 . . . Ne1 59 g3 Nf3 60 Ke4 Kc8 61 Bxe5 Kd7 62 Kf4 Nh2, when the defender of the last black pawn can be driven away only by Bg1, but then comes . . . Nf3 attacking the bishop, and then the knight again returns to h2. . .

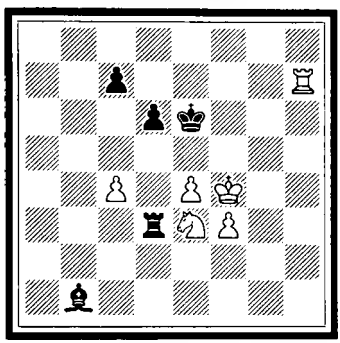
White is unable to avoid this set-up, for example, 59 Kf2 Nd3+ 60 Kf1 *(60 Kg3 e4 61 Kxg4 e3 62 Kf3 Ne1+* 63 Kg3 *e2 64 Kf2 Nxg2)* 60 . . . Kc8 61 g3 (this advance is forced - otherwise the g4 pawn cannot be attacked) 61 . . . Kd7 62 Ke2 e4 63 Ke3 Ne1 etc.

In search of stalemate



In the game **Kovalev-Khabkaev,** Gorky, 1982, it is not clear what White was hoping for by giving check - **49 Qc4+.** Perhaps that Black would. . . resign in view of zugzwang: 49 . . . Ka3 would seem to be met by 50 Qb5. And that is what happened! Meanwhile, Black should have calculated the variation one move further, when he would have found . . . stalemate: 51 . . . b1=Q+ 52 Qxb1.

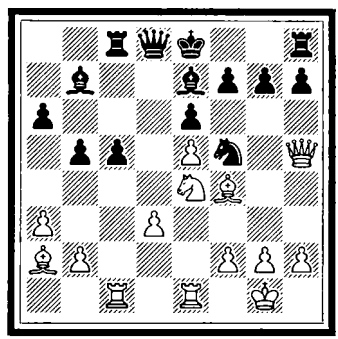
Lasker-Janowski
7th game of the World Championship Match
Paris, 1909



White should undoubtedly win. And yet we cannot help agreeing with Dr Tarrasch, who made the following comment on this situation:

"Janowski, emotionally depressed, resigned too early instead of trying a last and by no means bad chance. By continuing 63 . . . c5 64 Nd5 (an obvious move with a seemingly unavoidable threat of mate) 64 . . . Rxf3+!! 65 Kxf3 (on *65 Kg4* Black has the defence *65 . . . Rf7 - the authors)* 65 . . . Bxe4+ 66 Kxe4 he could have achieved a pretty stalemate position. Of course, the opponent could have avoided this by playing 64 Rb7. But it was possible that in the heat of battle he might not have noticed this stalemate".

Eliminating the opponent's attacking potential
Zefirov-Voloshin
Gorky, 1938



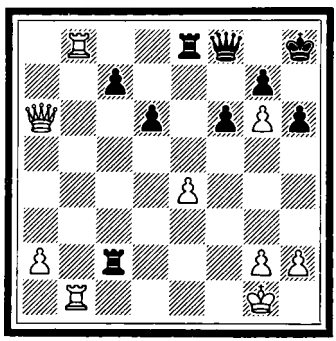
White began a seemingly spectacular combination.

20 Bxe6? g6
21 Bxf5?

Black became confused, worked out a lengthy variation - 21 . . . gxh5 22 Nf6+ Bxf6 23 exf6+ Kf8 24 Bh6+ Kg8 25 Bxc8, when against Re5 with mate at g5 or e8 there is no defence - and . . . resigned.

But a defence could have been found, and an extremely laconic one, without any lengthy variations. It was sufficient for Black to think about the fact that the opponent's central attacker was his knight, and after 21 . . . Bxe4! White would simply have lost a piece. . .

In search of complications
Capablanca-Thomas
Hastings, 1919

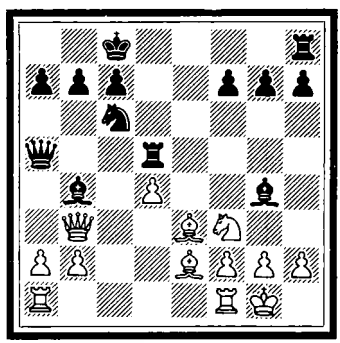


The position bears every indication that White has been attacking over the entire board, and Black has been defending. After **29 Qa8** he probably considered all his reserves to be exhausted and he resigned at the very instant when, for the first and last time, he could have gained... the advantage. The counter-blow 29 . . . Rxa2! would have won a pawn *(30 Qb7 Ra4!,* followed by capturing on e4).

To be fair, it should be mentioned that the diagram position is indeed hopeless. It was simply that the future World Champion should have continued 29 Rxe8 Qxe8 30 Qa4!, after which even 30 . . . Rc1+ does not save Black because of 31 Kf2!

Black's counter-arguments look less convincing in the following example, but even they should not have been disregarded.

Mieses-Forgac
St Petersburg, 1909



White played **13 a3,** and Black added to the collection of miniature games by resigning in view of the variation 13 . . . Bd6(e7) 14 Bd2, winning the rook at d5.

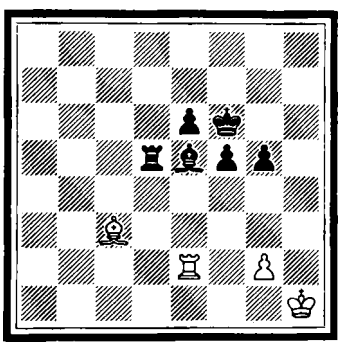
The alternative to capitulation was active counterplay against the white king - 13 . . . Bd6 14 Bd2 Bxf3! 15 Bxa5 (on *15 Bxf3* Black can reply *15 . . . Rb5)* 15 . . . Nxd4, and White would have had to find the only move 16 Bxf3!, which after 16 . . . Nxb3 17 Bxd5 Nxa5 18 Bxf7 would have left him the exchange up.

The attempt to retain his

queen - 16 Qe3? Nxe2+ 17 Kh1 Rh5 would have led to . . . the mating of his own king.

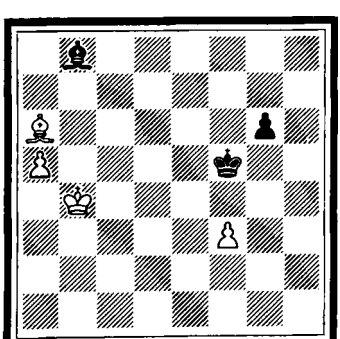
So it was worth playing on!.

What would you have played?



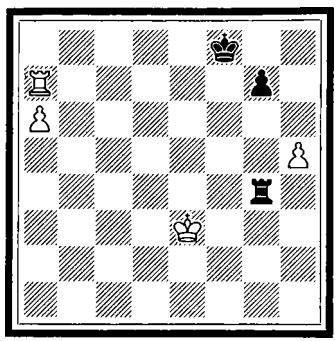
No. 39

This instructional example by the chess classic Dr Tarrasch has gone, without exaggeration, round the entire world in dozens of primers and hundreds of articles on the theme of zugzwang. The author gives the variation 1 Rxe5 Rxe5 2 g3 and Black loses, since after both 2 . . . g4 3 Kg2 and 2 . . . f4 3 g4 he loses his rook . . .



No. 40

Had Black known the answer to the previous test, he would also have found the saving idea here . . .



No. 41

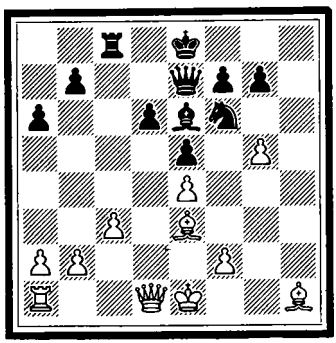
Black resigned, on observing that he would lose in the variation 60 . . . Ra4 61 Ra8+ Kf7 62 a7 Ra1 63 h6 gxh6 64 Rh8 Rxa7 65 Rh7+. . .

13
Counterattack

A hundred years ago, during the times of chess romanticism, such a concept in chess essentially did not exist. Poor defensive technique was the reason why the side which first gained an attack would normally carry it through (provided, of course, that he had at least the minimum of pieces remaining in order to mate the opponent's king). At any rate, up to the middle of the last century the examples in chess literature of a counteroffensive can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

In our day, counterattack, along with attack and defence, is a fully accepted method of conducting the struggle. At times, entire opening systems and variations are based precisely on the idea of counterattack.

Without particular exaggeration it can be said that today counterattack is the main weapon of Black, whom the laws of chess have placed in the position of the defending side. Not the methodical play for equality, which dominated in the first quarter of our century, but counterattack! And, essentially as a consequence, the once popular Orthodox Defence to the Queen's Gambit has died away, Philidor's Defence in reply to 1 e4 has become a rarity, but alive and rapidly developing are the Nimzo-Indian, Grünfeld and Sicilian Defences. However, strangely enough, even in the as yet insufficiently developed theory of the middlegame, counterattack still occupies a very modest place. Probably because even acknowledged masters of counterattack (as is also the case, however, with masters of combination) are unable to define with any precision that single moment when a counterattack is ripe and not yet too late, but explain examples from their own games by intuition. Supported, it is true, by accurate calculation and rich imagination.



In the 14th game of the **Karpov-Kasparov** World Championship Match, Moscow, 1985, after the 'normal' 17 . . . Nd7 18 Qh5 Black would have been left only with passive defence. He preferred a more risky, but active path, on which in addition he had chances not only of a draw.

17 . . . Ng4!?
18 Bd2

Now 19 f3 is threatened, winning the audicious knight. But . . .

18 . . . Qf8!

This manoeuvre is the basis of Black's entire plan. On 19 f3 or 19 Bf3 he has 19 . . . Qh8, when the knight is indirectly defended. 19 Qe2 Qh8 20 O—O—O Qh4 21 f3 also does not succeed - 21 . . . Bc4 22 Qg2 Nf2 23 Rg1 Nd3+.

19 Qf3 Qh8
20 Bg2 Qh4
21 b3

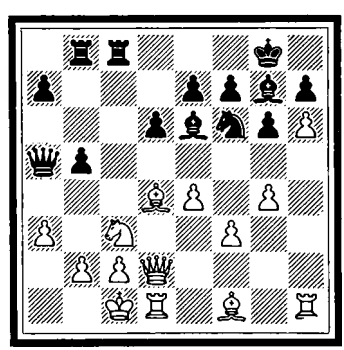
Preparing 22 Ke2 (which does not work immediately because of *21 . . . Bc4+)* and 23 Rh1.

21 . . . d5
22 Qg3

22 O—O—O is unpleasantly met by 22 . . . d4, and 22 exd5? Bxd5 23 Qxd5 Qxf2+ 24 Kd1 Rd8 is completely bad. This means that Black's active counterplay has been justified.

22 . . . Qxg3
23 fxg3

The endgame is level, and on move 32 peace was concluded.



This position had already occurred in practice, and after the seemingly obligatory retreat 15 . . . Bh8, in the game Tal-Sax, Moscow Interzonal, 1982, for example, after 16 Nd5 Qxd2+ 17 Rxd2 Nxd5

18 exd5 Bxd4 19 Rxd4 Bd7 20 Bd3 f6 21 b4 Rc7 22 Kb2 White obtained the more pleasant game.

But it turns out - and this was confirmed by the game **Plaskett-Watson,** Brighton, 1984 - that Black can pin his hopes on counterattack.

15 . . . b4! 16 Hxg7 bxa3! 17 Qh6 axb2+ 18 Kd2

What now? Resign? After all the capture on f6 followed by mate is unavoidable? . . .

18 . . . Bxg4!!
19 Bxf6

If 18 fxg4 e5!, and it is Black who begins a mating attack.

19 . . . Bh5

The line of White's attack has been blocked, and it is unlikely that the extra pieces can save his king.

20 Bd4 e5

For the moment Black keeps in reserve the final step of his pawn to b1.

21 Rxh5

This looks like desperation, but how else can he get at the enemy king?

21 . . . gxh5 22 Qg5 Qb4 23 Bd3 Qxd4 24 Nd5

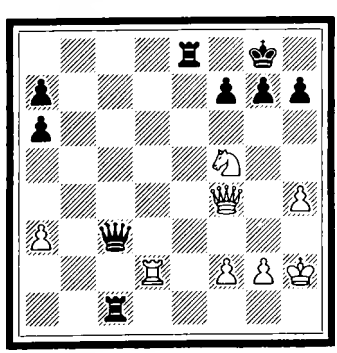
Threatening mates with the knight at e7 and f6, but it is Black to move . . .

24 . . . Qf2+ 25 Be2 Rxc2+! 26 Kxc2 Qxe2+ 27 Kc3 Qxf3+ 28 Kc4 Qb3 mate.

Even so, after the analysis of an extensive amount of practical material one can draw certain quite definite conclusions, as to when a counterattack is both possible and necessary.

The launching of a counterattack is generally obvious and relatively straightforward when the opponent's offensive has reached an impasse, or has completely exhausted itself. True, for this extreme accuracy in defence is normally demanded of the defending side.

An excellent example of such a counterattack is provided by the conclusion to the 25th game of the **Euwe-Alekhine** World Championship Match, Holland, 1937.



Black's exchange advantage promises him victory, but the struggle is not yet over, mainly because of the attacking position of the white knight. It is natural that, in defending, Alekhine should aim for the exchange of queens.

30 . . . Qc7
31 Rd6 Rc5
32 g3!

A clever idea (and at the same time the last chance)! If Black now carries out his threat of 32 . . . Rxf5, then after 33 Re6!! he is obliged to give up his queen - 33 . . . fxe6 34 Qxc7 Rxf2+ 35 Kh3. when the game will drag out for a long time.

32 . . . Rf8!

Euwe's idea is seen, the defence is completed, and preparations for a counter-offensive begin.

33 g4

Forced, since in the variation 33 Nxg7 Kxg7 34 Qf6+ Kg8 35 Rd4 White does not have a single square on the g-file after 35 . . . h5.

33 . . . f6
34 Kh3 h5

The weaknesses which have arisen in White's position on the kingside (far-advanced pawns, poorly defended king) allow Black to aim not for exchanges, but to develop his counteroffensive in the place where not long before he himself was being attacked.

35 Qd2 hxg4+
36 Kxg4 Qf7
37 h5 Rxf5!

The most quick and efficient, and, incidentally, a typical device. By giving up part of his material advantage, Black gets rid of the main enemy.

38 Kxf5 Qxh5+
39 Kf4 Qh4+

Now the exchange of queens by 39 . . . Qh5+ does not satisfy Black: he is counterattacking.

40 Kf3

Or mate in four moves after 40 Kf5 g6+ 41 Ke6 *(41 Kxg6 Qh7* mate) 41 . . . Qe4+ 42 Kd7 Qb7+ 43 Ke6 Qf7 mate.

40 . . . Qh3+
41 Ke4

The king cannot return to f4 because of 41 . . . Re8, when mate by 42 . . . g5 is unavoidable.

41 . . . Re8+ 42 Kd5 Qb3+ 43 Kd4 Qxa3 White resigns.

But in the chapters to come we will be talking about something else. The examples given should demonstrate to the reader a number

of typical situations in which there is sense in beginning a counterattack, and should as though reorientate the thinking of a chess player towards counterattacking actions. Grouped according to themes, these examples will suggest in which cases and in which way a counter-attack may prove successful.

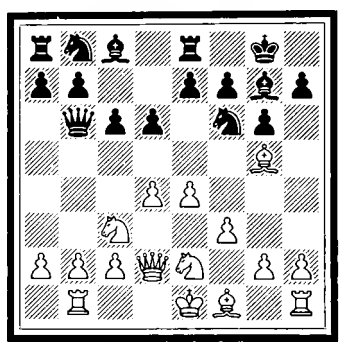
14
Counterblow in the centre

The player who holds the centre also holds the initiative. This stems from the very nature of chess: from the centre a piece can quickly move to any part of the board, and can take part in both defence and attack. And it is natural therefore that there should be a struggle for piece domination in the centre, in which the counterblow has long been a basic device of chess strategy. And it was this that gave rise to a strategic rule: an attack on one of the flanks promises success if the player has domination of the centre, or if the centre is closed, with blocked pawns.

If these conditions do not apply, then against a flank attack a counter-blow in the centre can be very effective.

The counterattack begun with a pawn advance in the centre is rightly regarded as classical, and its principles have been thoroughly studied. But our examples should remind the reader of those factors by which he should be guided.

Witkowski-Fuderer
Lyons, 1955



9 g4?

A clear breaking of the afore-mentioned rule: White is not stronger in the centre, and the pawn skeleton has not yet been fixed.

9 ... Nbd7
10 h4 e5!

At just the right time. Now in the event of the stubborn 11 h5 exd4 12 Nxd4 d5! the initiative passes completely to Black.

11 d5 cxd5

If Black wanted to fall in with his opponent's intentions, it would be hard to think of a better possibility than 11 ... c5??, closing the centre.

12 Nxd5 Nxd5
13 Qxd5 h6
14 Bg2 Nc5

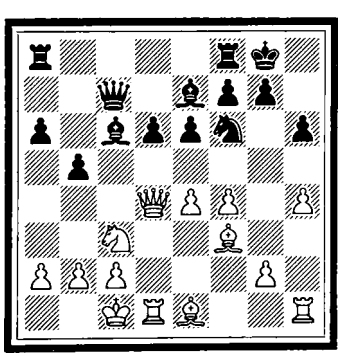
Threatening 15 . . . Be6, trapping the queen.

15 Qc4 d5!
16 exd5 e4!

And White's position collapses. An excellent illustration of our theme!

17 Bg2 Bd7 18 Qb4 exf3 19 Bxf3 Bb5 20 a4 Bxe2 21 Bxe2 Qd6 22 Kd1 Qxd5 23 Rf1 Rad8 24 Bc4 Qg2 25 Rxf7 Qxg4+ 26 Rf3+ Kh8 White resigns.

Experienced players invariably prefer a possible counterattack in the centre to any other form of counterplay. In this sense, in the game **Averbakh-Botvinnik,** Moscow, 1957, Black's move 16 . . . b5 was accompanied by an instructive comment by the ex-World Champion.



It might be thought that, in reply to White's offensive on the kingside, Black is beginning a storming of the queenside castled position. But this is not so, and here is what Botvinnik writes: "Were it not for the . . . b5-b4 advance, Black would merely be a spectator to the development of his opponent's attack on the kingside. But while the white knight is making the journey from c3 to g3, Black will succeed in intensifying the pressure along the a8-h1 diagonal, and in particular in securing control of the d5 square".

Take note: Black is thinking not about the rapid advance of his a- and b- pawns for the opening of lines, but about the d5 square! And this is justified: the centre is mobile, and a counterattack here promises good chances.

17 g4 b4
18 Ne2

Of course, not 18 Qxb4 in view of 18 . . . d5.

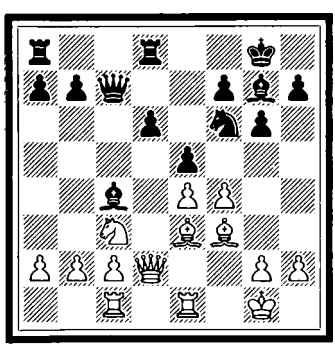
18 . . . Qb7!
19 Ng3 d5!

Botvinnik, who has always professed his faith in classical chess, strikes a truly classical counterblow in the centre! Of White's attack not even a trace remains, and the

variation 20 g5 dxe4! 21 gxf6 Bxf6 is clearly unfavourable for him.

After **20 e5 Ne4 21 Bxe4 dxe4 22 Qe3 Rfd8** the initiative completely passed to Black.

The high cost which a player may not begrudge paying for a timely breakthrough in the centre is demonstrated by the game **Rauzer-Botvinnik,** 8th USSR Championship, Leningrad, 1933.



Had White realized the idea associated with Black's previous move 15 . . . e5, he would have removed the tension in the centre by 16 fxe5, which would have led to a roughly equal position. But he decided to seize the centre, wishing to continue his pawn storm on the kingside.

16 b3(?) d5!!

Is the number of pawns important, when it is a question of a counterattack on the most important part of the board!?

17 exd5 e4!

It is worth noting this typical breakthrough.

18 bxc4

Both 18 Bxe4 Nxe4 19 Nxe4 Bxd5 20 Qd3 Qc6 21 Bf2 Re8 followed by 22 . . . Bxg2, and 18 Nxe4 Nxd5 19 Kh1 Nxe3 20 Qxe3 Bd4 21 Qd2 Bb2 *(21 . . . Be6 22 c4 Be5 23 Qc2 Bxf4* is also possible) favour Black. Therefore White's decision is perfectly reasonable.

18 . . . exf3
19 c5 Qa5
20 Red1

The white pawns on the 5th rank look threatening, but are in fact weak. 20 d6 is bad - 20 . . . Ng4 21 Ne4 Qxd2 22 Bxd2 f2+ 23 Nxf2 Bd4, as is 20 gxf3 Nxd5 21 Nxd5 Qxd2 22 Bxd2 Rxd5. White would have had better saving chances after 20 Qd3!, but even then Black's counterattack must be considered a complete success.

The game itself concluded as follows.

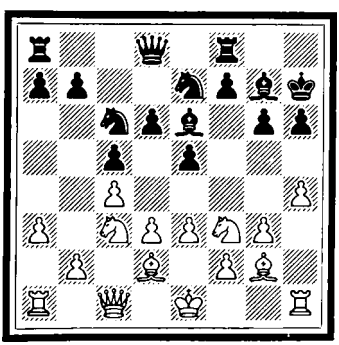
20 . . . Ng4!
21 Bd4 f2+

22 Kf1

If 22 Kh1, then 22 . . . Rxd5! 23 Nxd5 f1=Q+!, and White loses his queen.

22 . . . Qa6+ 23 Qe2 Bxd4 24 Rxd4 Qf6! 25 Rcd1 Qh4 26 Qd3 Re8 27 Re4 f5! 28 Re6 Nxh2+ 29 Ke2 Qxf4

In view of the loss of the exchange - 30 Rf1 Nxf1 31 Kxf1 Rxe6 32 dxe6 Qe5 - White resigned and 'presented' his opponent with the brilliancy prize.



In the game **Babris-Ekabsons,** Riga, 1984, with his last move 12 h2-h4 White has begun a flank diversion, without having the slightest grounds for it. In reply came the 'scientifically approved' counterblow in the centre.

12 . . . d5! 13 cxd5 Nxd5 14 Nxd5 Bxd5 15 Qxc5 Kg8!?

Coolly averting Ng5+, either immediately or after 16 Qxd5.

16 Qc2

Practically forced, since after 16 O—O Rc8 the white queen comes under fire.

16 . . . Rc8
17 Bc3

This leads to a difficult position, but even after the relatively best 17 Qd1!? Qb6 with the threat of 18 . . . Bb3 Black's initiative would have more than compensated for the pawn.

17 . . . Nd4! 18 exd4 exd4 19 O—O dxc3 20 b4 a5! 21 Rab1

The lesser evil was 21 bxa5, although even then White's position was probably lost.

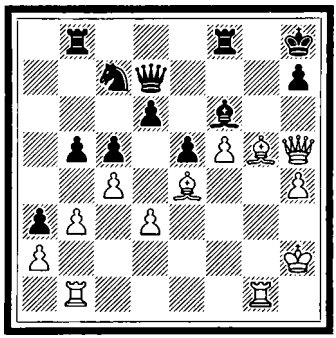
21 . . . a4!
22 Qxa4 Ra8
23 Qc2 Rxa3

The powerful passed pawn is securely defended, Black's pieces are active, and soon the game concluded in his favour.

Chernin-Gordeyev

Vilnius, 1983

White is threatening to strengthen his attack with 28 Bxf6+ Rxf6 29 Rg6 followed by Rbg1. In accordance with the laws of chess strategy, Black answers a flank attack with a counterblow in the centre, since only this will



allow him to bring up reserves (in this case - his knight) to the decisive part of the board.

27 . . . d5! 28 cxd5 Nxd5 29 Rbc1 Nf4! 30 Bxf6+ Rxf6 31 Qg5

It would appear that Black is lost, but. . .

31 . . . Rg6!!

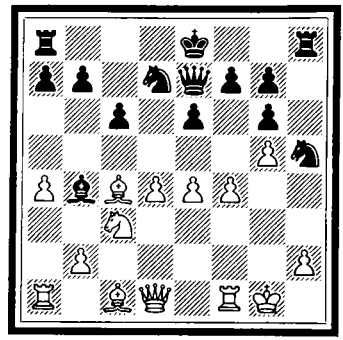
And White is forced to give up his queen, since he obviously cannot contemplate 32 fxg6?? Qh3 mate.

32 Qxf4 exf4 33 fxg6 hxg6 34 Rxg6 Qh7 35 Rg4 Qh5 36 Rcg1 c4!

White's bishop loses its support, and for the black rook a file is opened.

37 bxc4 bxc4 38 dxc4 Re8 39 Bf3 Qc5, and a draw was agreed.

Here, in the game **Polugayevsky-Portisch,** Amsterdam, 1984, White is attacking over the entire front. He only needs to complete his development, and the breakthrough by d4-d5 or even f4-f5 will decide the game.



This makes all the more effective Black's counterblow in the centre.

15 . . . e5!
16 fxe5 Nxe5
17 Bb3

17 dxe5 Qc5+ is totally bad.

17 . . . O—O—O
18 Be3 f5

Following the same strategy of attacks on the centre. Its tactical justification lies in the variation 19 exf5 Nc4 20 Bc1 Nxb2 21 Qg4 *(21 Bxb2 Bxc3 22 Bxc3 Qe3+)* 21 . . . Rxd4, when 22 Qxd4 is bad because of 22 . . . Bc5.

19 gxf6 Nxf6
20 Qe2 Neg4

Now White is obliged, by an exchange sacrifice, to

rid himself of the threats against h2, e4 etc.

21 Rxf6! Nxf6 22 e5 Nh5 23 Qg4+ Kb8 24 Ne4

Alas, 24 Bg5 does not work because of 24 . . . Rxd4!

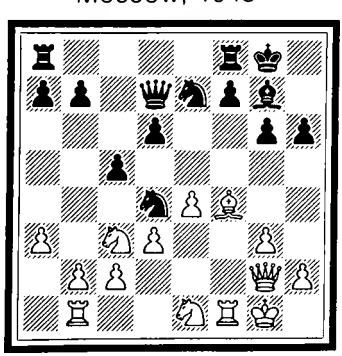
24 . . . Rdf8 25 Ng5 Nf6 26 Qe6 Nd7 27 Qxe7 Bxe7 28 Nf7 Rh4 29 a5

White prevents the black knight from going to d5 and evidently has some compensation for the exchange. In the subsequent play he managed to maintain the balance, and on move 55 the game ended in a draw.

The great importance of active counterplay in the centre is convincingly emphasized by two examples where the positions are very different, but the principles of play have much in common.

Smyslov-Kotov

Moscow, 1943



17 g4

It is quite apparent that Black is mobilized no worse than his opponent, and in fact his minor pieces are more harmoniously and actively placed. For the moment there is approximate balance in the centre, and this factor did not give White grounds for such a risky flank sortie.

17 . . . Rad8!

Preparing a counterblow in the centre, after which White's weaknesses will become very perceptible.

18 Kh1 Ne6
19 Bd2 d5!
20 Nf3 d4??

Having worked out a tempting variation. Black makes a fundamental mistake. He would have gained excellent counterplay after opening the centre - 20 . . . dxe4 21 Nxe4 Nd5, or after a further undermining of the white pawn chain - 20 . . . c4. But now, by closing the centre, Black frees his opponent's hands for the continuation of his flank attack.

21 Ne2 Nc6
22 Qh3 Kh7
23 Ng3 f6

This was the position for which Black was aiming when he closed the centre.

He was planning to follow up with . . . Ne5, with the idea either of himself exchanging on f3, or after Nxe5 of seizing the f4 square. But his erroneous strategy encounters a quite logical refutation.

24 Nf5!! gxf5

24 . . . g5 was perhaps the lesser evil, but then after 25 Qg3 with the threat of h2-h4 White's advantage is undisputed.

25 gxf5 Nc7

On the decisive part of the battlefield White has acquired an advantage in force, and he easily builds up his attack.

26 Rg1

With the intention of 27 Rxg7+ Kxg7 28 Rg1+ Kf7 29 Qh5+ Ke7 30 Rg7+.

26 . . . Ne8
27 Rg6 Rf7
28 Rbg1

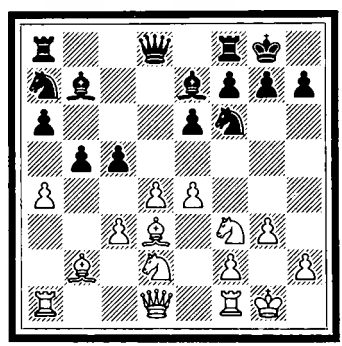
Threatening mate in two moves: 29 Rxh6+ Bxh6 30 Qxh6 mate.

28 . . . Kg8 29 Rxh6 Kf8 30 Rh7 Ke7 31 Qh5 Kd6 32 Bf4+ Ne5 33 Bxe5+ fxe5 34 f6!

An elegant conclusion to the attack. Black cannot now avoid major loss of material.

34 . . . Nxf6 35 Qxe5+ Kc6 36 Rhxg7 Kb5 37 Nxd4+ Kb6 38 b4 Rc8 39 Rxf7 Qxf7 40 Qd6+ Rc6 41 Nxc6 Nxe4 42 bxc5+ Resigns.

A different, fundamentally correct decision was taken in the game **Korchnoi-Karpov,** 41st USSR Championship, Moscow, 1973, by the future World Champion.



The white pieces and pawns have occupied the centre, but Black is keeping the d4 square under tension. In his notes to the game Karpov writes that 13 . . . c4, as recommended in *Informator,* did not appeal to him, for the very reason that it relieved the tension in the centre and "would have freed White's hands for the development of his initiative in the centre and on the kingside". It was this that resulted in his decision - that it was better to sacrifice a pawn.

13 . . . Nc6

In the variation 14 ...axb5 axb5 15 Bxb5 cxd4 16 cxd4 Qb6 17 Qe2 Rxa1 18 Bxa1 Black intends to continue 18 ... Nb4 with the threat of 19 ... Nxe4 20 Nxe4 Bxe4 21 Qxe4 Qxb5, and after 19 Bc4 Rc8 to obtain for the pawn the possibility of "constantly threatening the rather awkward placing of the opponent's minor pieces" (Karpov).

The continuation chosen by White concedes the d5 square to Black, the position in the centre is stabilized, and for the pawn Black gains more than sufficient compensation in the form of his active pieces.

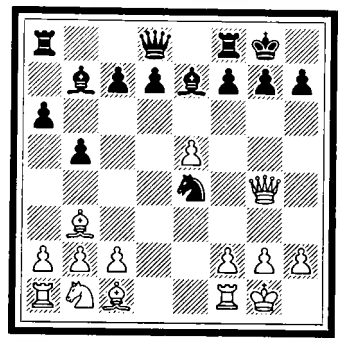
14 e5 Nd5 15 axb5 axb5 16 Qb1 cxd4 17 cxd4 h6 18 Bxb5 Qb6

The further course of the game does not bear any direct relation to the theme of counterattacking in the centre. We will merely remark that, at the moment when he capitulated on move 41, White was still a pawn up.

More rarely a counterattack in the centre begins not with a pawn counterblow, but with the seizure of the central squares by pieces. However, this means of active defence must also be kept in view.

Tal-Smyslov

45th USSR Championship, Leningrad, 1977



After employing a new continuation, White has gained a menacing attacking position. With an introductory move he drives back the black knight, since the direct 11 Bh6 does not achieve its aim, if only because of 11 ... Bg5.

11 f3 Ng5

Bad is 11 ... Bc5+ 12 Kh1 Nf2+ 13 Rxf2 Bxf2 14 Bg5, when the black king cannot be saved.

12 f4?

A significant inaccuracy. In continuing his offensive on the flank, White allows the black knight to return to its active position in the centre. The interposition of 12 Nc3, and if 12 ... Kh8 13 f4, would have retained for White all the advantages of his position.

12 ... Ne4

13 f5 Kh8
14 Rf3?

Carried away by his attack, White forgets about the possible piece counterattack in the centre, and fails to make the now essential move 14 Be3.

14 . . . Bc5+

Now all Black's minor pieces are exerting pressure on the centre.

15 Kf1

If 15 Be3, then 15 . . . Qe7! is very strong, and White does not have the thematic 16 f6 in view of 16 . . . Bxe3+ 17 Rxe3 Nxf6.

15 . . . d6!

After the pieces, a counterblow in the centre is struck by a pawn. The inititiative now completely belongs to Black.

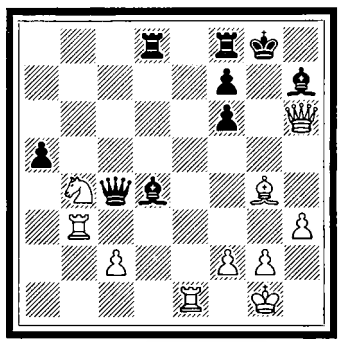
16 f6 g6
17 Qh4 dxe5

The threats of Black, who holds all the communications in the centre, are much more dangerous than the attack on the h-file. There followed:

18 Ke2 Qd4!
19 Rh3

Otherwise it is difficult to parry the prepared 19 . . . Nc3+.

19 . . . Qf2+ 20 Qxf2 Nxf2 21 Rh4 Ne4 22 Bh6 Nxf6 23 Bxf8 Rxf8, and Black converted his great advantage into a win.



In the game **Mestel - Flear,** London, 1986, Black is not only a pawn down, but also his king is about to come under attack. The deadly transfer of the rook to g3 is threatened, and therefore the white knight is immune. Black is saved only by the domination of his pieces — in particular his heavy pieces — on the central files: this enables him, simultaneously with defence, to seek a counterattack.

27 . . . Rfe8!
28 Reb1

It is obvious that, in the event of the exchange of rooks, the threat of a back rank invasion will be decisive. This could have been securely prevented by 28 Rf1, but then comes 28 . . . Bc3!, blocking the white rook's path to g3,

and also preparing the terrible 29 . . . Qxf1+ with mate next move. Such is the power of Black's piece domination in the centre.

28 . . . Qc5!

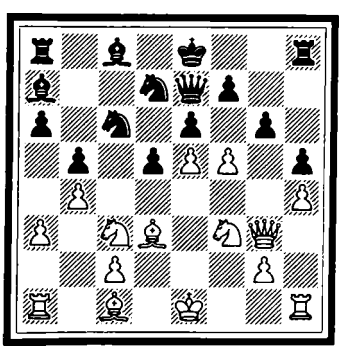
Again preventing the rook move to g3 — because of 29 . . . Bxf2+.

29 Nd3 Qxc2
30 Bd1 Re1+!

This concludes the game, since 31 Nxe1 fails to 31 . . . Qxf2+ 32 Kh2 Be5+, mating.

31 Kh2 Rxd1 32 Rb8 Qc7+ White resigns.

Spielmann-Keres
Nordvik, 1938



By 14 f5 White has begun a direct storming of the king-side. Simultaneously he has enabled his last undeveloped minor piece — his dark-square bishop — to come into play, and he threatens not only 15 fxg6, but also 15 Bg5. On 14 . . . gxf5 White had prepared 15 Bxf5, and if 15 . . . exf5 16 Nxd5 Qd8 17 Bg5.

White's plan would have been irreproachable, had he been dominating the centre. But this is not the case, and Black begins a piece counter-attack against White's main outpost — his e5 pawn. Therefore White should have been content with the more modest 14 Ne2 followed by Bd2.

14 . . . Bb8!!

Now 15 Bg5 is parried by 15 . . . Ndxe5 with the threat of 16 . . . Nxd3+. At the same time Black defends the d6 square and on 15 Bf4 he now has 15 . . . d4 16 Ne4 exf5. Therefore White is practically forced to continue his policy of direct attack.

15 fxg6 Ndxe5!
16 gxf7+ Qxf7
17 Ng5

White has no other way of parrying the attack on d3. But now, with gain of tempo, Black creates pressure along the a1-h8 diagonal.

17 . . . Qf6
18 Rf1?

This loses immediately, but even the better 18 Bd2 would not have saved White against the mounting counterattack. For example, 18 . . . Nxd3+ 19

Qxd3 Ne5 20 Qg3 Ng4 21 Qf3 Qe5+, and material loss for White becomes inevitable. However, even without concrete variations it is apparent how the counterattack on e5 has increased the power of the black pieces.

18 . . . Ng4!
19 Qf3

Or 19 Rxf6 Bxg3+, when 20 Ke2 is decisively met by 20 . . . Be5, and 20 Kd2 by 20 . . . Bxh4.

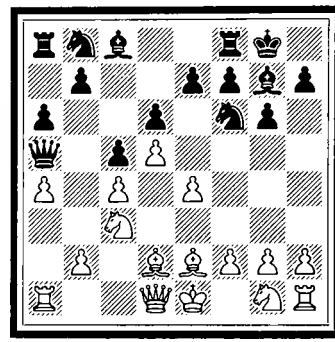
19 . . . Qxc3+ 20 Kd1 Qg7 21 Qe2 Rf8 22 Rxf8+ Kxf8 23 Nxe6+ Bxe6 24 Qxe6 Nf2+ 25 Ke1 Nxd3+ 26 cxd3

And, without waiting for Black's reply, White resigned.

We will conclude this chapter by referring to two examples from opening theory.

After **1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 Be2 O—O 6 Bg5 c5 7 d5 a6 8 a4 Qa5 9 Bd2** a well known position is reached from the Averbakh Variation of the King's Indian Defence.

In the first game, **Averbakh–Panno,** Buenos Aires, 1954,



with which this variation began, Black incorrectly closed the centre.

9 . . . e5?

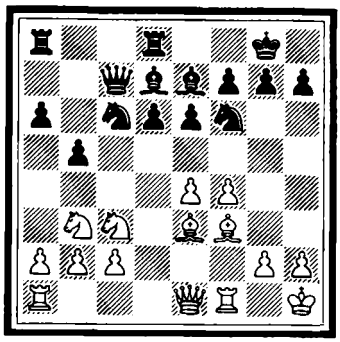
This allowed White to begin an attack on the kingside.

10 g4! Ne8 11 h4 f5 12 h5 f4 13 g5! Rf7 14 Bg4 Qd8 15 Bxc8 Qxc8 16 Nf3 Bf8 17 Ke2! Rg7 18 Rh4 Nd7 19 hxg6 hxg6 20 Qh1 Be7 21 Rh8+, and White soon won.

Meanwhile, in the game **Ciocaltea - Gligoric,** Moscow Olympiad, 1956, the correct counterattack in the centre led to the white king beginning to feel no happier than Black's.

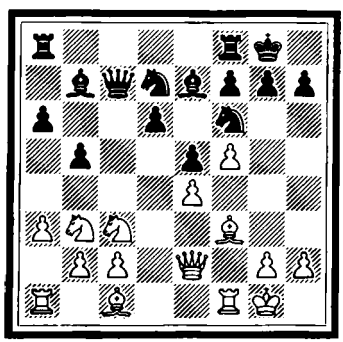
9 . . . e6 10 g4? exd5 11 exd5 Qd8 12 h4 Re8 13 Kf1 Nbd7 14 h5 Ne4 15 Nxe4 Rxe4 16 hxg6 fxg6 17 Ra3 Nf6, with counterplay.

What would you have played?



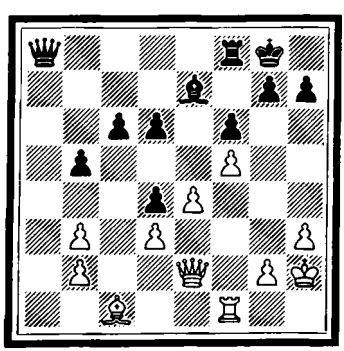
No. 42

White began an offensive with **14 g4.** Assess the position. What plan should Black choose?



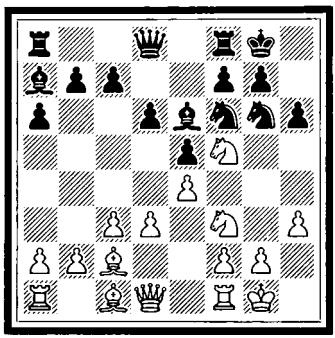
No. 43

Here the pawn structure in the centre is more fixed than in the previous example. How should Black react to the **14 g4** attack?



No. 44

Despite the exchanges, the position is still a middlegame one, and White continued his kingside pawn storm with **22 g4.** Find the strongest plan of counterplay.



No. 45

By the manoeuvre Nb1-d2-c4-e3-f5 White has demonstrated her intention of attacking. Her last move was 13 h3. Is this plan justified? Could White have played differently? What should Black do?

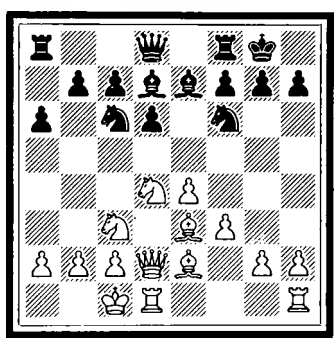
15
Whoever is quicker, whoever is the more generous . . .

It is roughly under this motto that the play proceeds when an attack on one flank is met by a counterattack on the other.

Such a 'battle of encounter' normally inflames to the limit the situation on the board: delay and pursuit of material gain, or, on the contrary, stinginess, are all equivalent to defeat. The value of every tempo grows sharply. And therefore experienced and genuinely strong players resort to a counterattack on the opposite flank, only if they have no prospect of counterplay in the centre.

But if there is such a prospect, then we cannot help but agree with the outstanding theorist, Aron Nimzowitsch, who in his book *My System* gives the following example.

Nimzowitsch-N.N.
Riga, 1910



10 . . . b5

Nimzowitsch comments:

"The attack seems hardly in place here, so that my opponent's expression, 'Now we're in for it', charged as it was with the lust of battle, struck one as all the prettier. I understood him at once; he clearly expected the answer 11 g4 with a consequent race between

the pawns on both sides according to the motto 'who gets in first wins'. What did happen however was

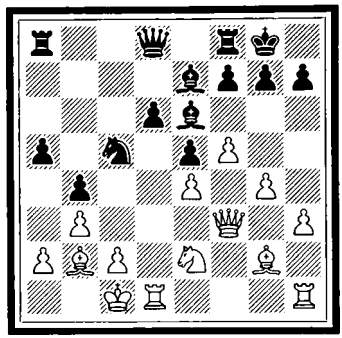
11 Nd5

With this move, by which an outpost station in the d-file is occupied, White obeys another principle of position play, namely that premature flank attacks should be punished by play in the centre. There followed

11 ... Nxd5
12 exd5 Nxd4
13 Bxd4

And White has very much the better game ... And the moral of the story is: Do not be always thinking of attack!".

Although this monologue by Nimzowitsch relates more in its subject matter to the previous chapter, it also as it were, establishes a bridge, with our discussion of attacks on opposite sides. If there is a choice, then, instead of a flank counterattack, it is more effective to strike in the centre. But if there is no choice, the counterattack must be conducted with the utmost energy. An example is provided by the game **Gereben - Geller,** Budapest, 1952.



17 ... a4!

The most swift and determined. It becomes obvious that Black's counterattack outstrips his opponent's offensive on the opposite flank. If White accepts the sacrifice — 18 fxe6, then 18 ... fxe6 19 Qg3 Bh4 20 Qh2 Rf2 21 Rhe1 Bg5+ allows Black to cause complete disharmony in the co-ordination of the opponent's pieces and to assail the white king with clearly superior forces.

18 h4 axb3
19 axb3 Ra2!

Intending also to offer a rook in the variation ... Qa5, ... Rxb2, ... Qa3+ and ... Ra8.

20 fxe6 fxe6 21 Qe3 Qa5 22 c4 Rxb2! 23 Kxb2 Qa3+ 24 Kb1 Ra8 25 Nc1 Qa1+ 26 Kc2

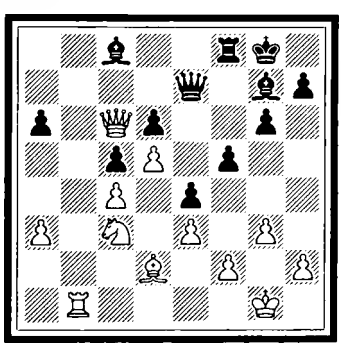
One more move, and the

white king will slip out, but . . .

26 . . . Ra2+
27 Nxa2 Qxa2+
28 Kc1 Nxb3+
29 Qxb3 Qxb3

All is now clear. Black's swift counterattack has given him a material advantage, and when he brought his dark-square bishop into play, White resigned.

A sacrifice also enabled Black to carry out a counter-attack in the game **Benko - Tal,** Candidates Tournament, Yugoslavia, 1959.



With the kings castled on the same side, White has been conducting an offensive on the queenside and has succeeded in invading his opponent's position. Any defensive measures by Black are doomed to failure, and he begins a counterattack on the opposite flank. Tal himself considered the grounds for it to be, firstly, the weakness of the light squares around the white king, and secondly, the remoteness of the white queen from the kingside (as we will see a little later, often a whole system of counterattack is based on such a diversion).

25 . . . f4!
26 Rb8

On 26 exf4 Tal had prepared 26 . . . e3! 27 fxe3 Bxc3 28 Bxc3 Qxe3+, and on 26 gxf4 — the same move as in the game.

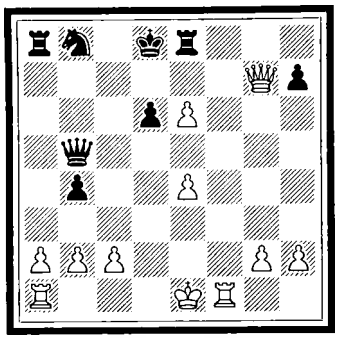
26 . . . Bh3!
27 Rxf8+

One illustration of the counterattack's strength is a variation with the sacrifice of the queen — 27 Qb7 fxe3!

27 . . . Qxf8
28 exf4 Qb8!

The threats to the white king render Benko's position hopeless, and after **29 Ne2 Qb1+** his overstepping of the time limit merely substituted one form of defeat for another.

In the game **Velimirovic - Gaprindashvili,** Bela Crkva, 1984, for the piece White does not have just four pawns — he



also has a very strong attack: in particular 19 Rf8 is threatened, after which the black king will be left completely 'bare'.

Black is saved by finding a fortunate possibility of counterplay against the white king.

18 ... b3!!
19 cxb3

Evidently best. After the exchange of queens — 19 Qf6+ Kc7 20 Qc3+ Nc6 21 Qxb3 Qxb3 22 cxb3 Rxe6 the attack comes to a halt and the endgame is roughly equal.

19 ... Qb4+

This was the reason for the sacrifice of a further pawn.

20 Kf2 Qc5+
21 Kg3 Ra7!
22 Qf6+ Rae7
23 Rad1

Or 23 h3 Nc6 24 Kh2 Qe5+ 25 Qxe5 Nxe5, and the e6 pawn is lost.

23 ... Rg8+

Which king is 'worse'?

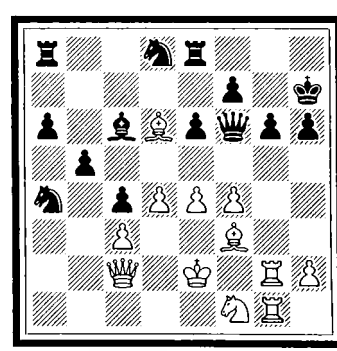
24 Kh4 Nc6
25 Rd5 Qb4
26 Rf4 Rxg2
27 e5 Qe1+
28 Kh3 Rg3+!

The only way! In the variation 28 ... Qg1 White gets there first: 29 Qf8+ Kc7 30 exd6+ Kb6 31 Rb4+! Nxb4 32 Qb8+ Ka6 33 dxe7 and wins.

29 hxg3 Qh1+ 30 Kg4 Qxd5 31 exd6 Ne5+ 32 Kh5 Nd7+ 33 Qg5 Qh1+ 34 Kg4 h5+! 35 Kf5

The pawn is taboo because of the threat of 36 ... Rg7+.

35 ... Qd5+ 36 Kg6 Qxd6 37 Qa5+ Nb6 38 Rf8+ Kc7 39 Qc3+ Kb7 40 Rf7 Qxe6+ 41 Qf6 Qg4+ 42 Kh6 Rxf7 43 Qxf7+ Nd7 44 Qd5+, and soon the players agreed a draw.



In this game, **Sakhatova - L. Zaitseva,** Moscow, 1985, it is not just the material balance which has been disturbed, but also many of the customary signs by which a position is assessed. The white king is in the centre, but an attack is threatened against its black opponent sheltering behind a pawn chain: a breakthrough in the centre is possible, a sacrifice on g6 . . .

A natural and perfectly adequate defence for Black would have been provided by a strong counterblow on the opposite flank — 27 ... b4!! Now in the event of 28 Bxb4 Qxf4 White's dark-square bishop would have been unable to participate in the attack, while after 28 Be5 b3! 29 Qd2 *(29 Qc1 b2 30 Qc2 Qxe5 31 fxe5 b1=Q 32 Qxb1 Nxc3+)* the pressure on the g6 pawn is markedly weakened, and all the time the pawn at b3 restricts White's forces.

A more passive defence by Black led to her defeat.

27 . . . Nb7?
28 Be5 Qe7
29 d5! Bd7

After 29 . . . exd5 30 exd5 Bd7 White has the decisive 31 Rxg6.

30 Ne3

With the threat of 31 Ng4.

30 . . . f6
31 Bxf6! Qxf6
32 e5 Nxc3+

A diverting sacrifice, which . . . does not have to be accepted.

33 Kf1! Nxd5
34 Nxd5 exd5
33 exf6 Bf5
36 Qxf5!

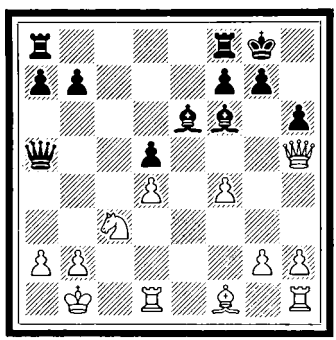
The simplest, quickest and most elegant.

36 . . . gxf5
37 Rg7+

Black resigns: after 37 . . . Kh8 38 R1g6 there is no way of avoiding mate.

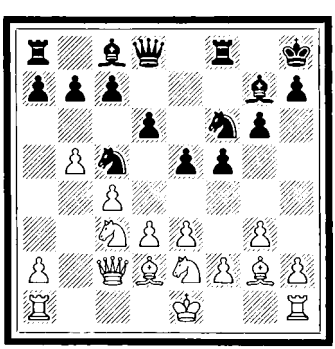
In general, the counter-attack on the opposite flank is in every way subject to the principles of conducting an attack, which, strictly speaking, is not a theme of the given book. Therefore we will restrict ourselves to these few energetic examples.

What would you have played?



No. 46

White has already begun an attack on the kingside with 16 f2-f4. He now threatens, in particular, 17 f5 Bd7 18 g4 followed by a pawn storm, plus pressure on the d5 pawn after Bg2. What should Black do?

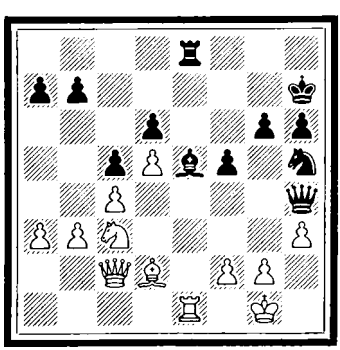


No. 47

White has seized space on the queenside and is controlling important points in the centre, such as d5. His bishop controls the h1-a8 diagonal. Is there a weakness in White's position and does Black have grounds for a counterattack? Where should it be sought?

16
Forward — through sacrifices!

A more typical procedure than the one examined in the previous chapter is the launching of a counterattack with the help of sacrifices. Moreover, the amount of material sacrificed can often be very substantial. Especially in cases where the resulting complications are subject to more or less precise calculation. But, of course, this factor does not belittle the merit of a player who finds the idea of counterplay and has the courage to carry it out.



In the game **Uhlmann - Fischer,** Seigen Olympiad, 1970, the accumulation of Black's pieces on the kingside and his advanced pawns there are by no means an indication of the strength of his position. On the contrary, the co-ordination of the black pieces is far from ideal, the pin on the e-file is very unpleasant, and with his next move White sets his opponent serious problems.

25 Nb5

The two threats — 26 Nxd6 and 26 Nxa7 — can be parried only passively, by returning the rook to a8, but then White has both the transfer of his knight to e6 with gain of tempo (after which Black has to reckon with a possible *Nxc5*), as well as the simple 26 Bc3, which may lead to an invasion along the e-file or to the creation of a powerful passed d-pawn. Black finds a way to save the game by sharp counterplay.

25 . . . a6!
26 Nxd6 Bd4!!

Following the pawn a rook is sacrificed, and White cannot refuse the gift. On 27 Be3 Black wins by 27 . . . Rxe3! 28 Rxe3 Bxe3 29 fxe3 Qe1+, 30 . . . Qg3+ and 31 . . . Qxd6.

27 Nxe8 Qxf2+
28 Kh2

Avoiding the 'possibility' of being mated in the variation 28 Kh1?? Ng3+ 29 Kh2 Nf1+ 30 Rxf1 Be5+ 31 Kh1 Qxf1 mate.

28 . . . Nf4
29 Bxf4!

White does not begrudge his queen: on 29 . . . Qxc2 there follows 30 d6!, and the pawn cannot be stopped.

29 . . . Qxe1
30 Qc1 Qxe8
31 Bxh6

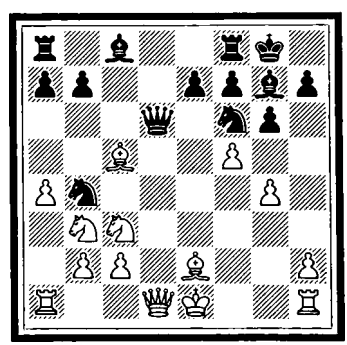
Black's counterattack has been beaten off and White is a pawn up. But each of the remaining black pieces is much more active than its white opponent, and this proves sufficient to maintain the balance.

31 . . . Qe4
32 Bf4 Kg8
33 Qf1 Kf7
34 h4

34 a4 is better, although even then the win for White is problematic.

34 . . . b5! 35 Bg3 bxc4 36 bxc4 Bf6 37 Qf4 Qxf4 38 Bxf4 Bxh4 Draw agreed.

Incidentally, the defending side can permit himself such considerable material sacrifices, only if the counterattack is aimed directly against the enemy king. So that if it is exposed or insecurely placed, this often acts as a kind of guide to the counterattacker. "If it is a matter of the king, there is no place for miserliness!" This slogan of the 'masters of attack' is also perfectly applicable for the mounting of a counterattack, and it was by this that Black was guided in the game **Alekhine - Botvinnik,** Nottingham, 1936.

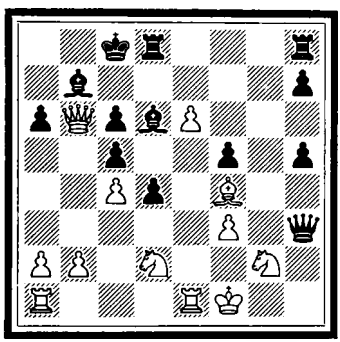


If Black avoids material loss by 14 . . . Qxd1+ 15 Rxd1 Nc6 *(15 . . . Nxc2+ 16 Kd2)*, then after 16 g5 Nd7 17 f6 Bh8 18 Nd5 his position is unenviable. But he boldly went in for this position, intending to mount an attack on the white king at the cost of two pieces.

14 . . . Qf4!
15 Rf1 Qxh2
16 Bxb4 Nxg4!

The only way! After 16 . . . Qg3+ 17 Rf2 Nxg4 White would have gained the necessary tempo for defence — 18 Ne4!

17 Bxg4 Qg3+ 18 Rf2 Qg1+ 19 Rf1 Draw agreed.



Only a counterattack enabled Black to save this game between two acknowledged masters of tactical play, **Ragozin - Tolush,** Moscow, 1938. This example is given so as once again to emphasize that in a counterattack one cannot limit oneself to half-measures. It is this type of play that demands the maximum determination and 'generosity'.

White is not only a piece up — he also has the possibility, exploiting the fact that it is his turn to move, of launching an attack on the king. For Black the only hope is associated with the relatively shaky position of the white king, which, it is true, is securely defended by the knights.

26 e7

Seemingly decisive: on 26 . . . Rdg8 it stands to reason that White will choose not 27 Bxd6 because of mate in one move, and not 27 Re2 because of mate in two moves, but the diverting 27 e8=Q+ Rxe8 28 Bxd6, when it is the black king that is mated at c7.

26 . . . Bxf4!

Black is now left a rook down, but on the other hand the dark squares around the white king are significantly weakened, and in addition the black bishop is transformed from a defender into an attacker.

27 exd8=Q+ Rxd8 28 e7

White can no longer particularly delay: for example, the prophylactic 28 Re2 would have been met by either 28 . . . Rg8, or 28 . . . Bg3, or 28 . . . Be3.

28 . . . Qh1+
29 Kf2 Be3+!
30 Nxe3 Qh4+!

Black has also given up his attacking bishop, in order that the knight should abandon its excellent defensive post at g2. If now 31 Kg2 or 31 Ke2, then 31 . . . Qxe7!

31 Kf1 Qh1+
32 Kf2

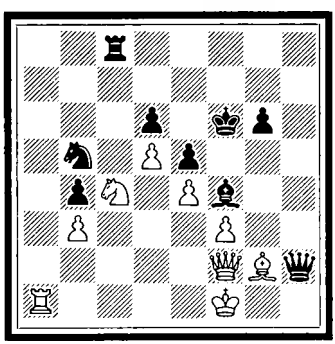
32 Ke2 does not help in view of 32 . . . d3+.

32 . . . Qh4+

Drawn by perpetual check.

It is possible that a knowledge of this game or at least of this motif enabled Black to find a way to save the following position.

Andreyev-Lutikov
Moscow, 1949



37 Qb6!

The game seems to be decided, since there is no way of defending the knight, and it cannot move in view of 38 Qxd6+ . . .

37 . . . Kg5!
38 Qxb5 Rxc4!!
39 Qxc4 Be3

At the cost of a rook Black has begun a counterattack on the dark squares, in which his king also intends to participate.

40 Qd3

40 Qxb4 Kf4 41 Qe1 Bd4! 42 Ra6 Qg1+ 43 Ke2 Qe3+ also leads to a draw.

40 . . . Kf4
41 Qd1

If White persists with 41 Ra6, then after 41 . . . Qg1+ 42 Ke2 Qxg2+ 43 Kd1 Kxf3 it is only Black who can think of winning.

41 . . . Qg1+
42 Ke2 Qxg2+
43 Kd3 Qb2
44 Ra6 Qc3+

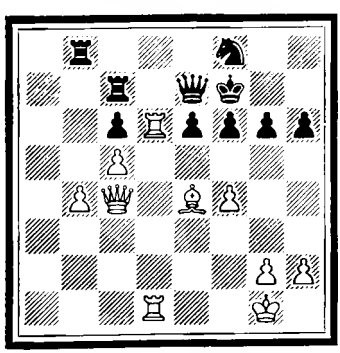
Drawn by perpetual check.

Sacrifices of less frightening dimensions occur much more frequently (and they must be considered the most typical and the most successful ways of launching a counterattack). However, it is they that enable the defender to seize the initiative and, without especially aiming for forcing continuations, to play 'as though nothing has happened': in the middlegame to disregard the material loss, which could tell only in the endgame, and, by exploiting the positional plusses gained in return for the sacrifice, calmly, without unnecessary nervousness, to hold the initiative. After sacrificing,

say, a rook or a minor piece, the counterattacker does not have a 'long-term future', and he is obliged to stake everything. But if he gives up only the exchange, he can think also of positional factors, which may fully compensate for his material deficit.

It should be mentioned that the sacrifice of a pawn for launching a counterattack can be carried out only comparatively rarely: after all, the opponent is by no means always obliged to accept this modest gift. Nevertheless, examples of the defender forcing the opponent to accept the sacrifice are instructive.

Burn-Chigorin
Ostende, 1907



A single glance at the diagram is sufficient to convince one of the difficulties facing Black. Defending the pawn by 37 . . . Rbc8 allows White to intensify the pressure over literally the entire board. Therefore Black's decision to activate his rooks at the cost of a pawn must be considered the best practical chance.

37	. . .	**Rcb7**
38	**Rb1**	**Rd7!**
39	**Rxc6**	**Rbd8**

Thus the d-file has been wrested from White.

40	**Rb6**	**f5**
41	**Bf3**	**Rd4**
42	**Qa6**	**Qh4!**

One of the principles of counterattack is the same as in attack: the point of it is not to regain the sacrificed material. Thus here on 42 . . . Rxf4 there would have followed 43 Rb7 Rd7 44 c6, when Black stands badly.

43	**Rb7+**	**Kg8**
44	**g3**	**Qf6**
45	**Qe2**	

In order to answer 45 . . . Rd2 with 46 Qe5.

45	. . .	**Rd3**
46	**c6**	**Qd4+**
47	**Kh1**	**Re3**
48	**Qf1**	**Qc3**
49	**Bg2**	

Evidently somewhat unsettled by the fact that the struggle has flared up anew, White misses the chance of

playing 49 Rc1!

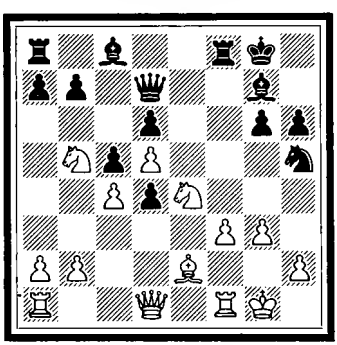
49 ... Rd2
50 c7 Rc2

Of course, the white passed pawns are formidable, but the invasion of Black's rooks into the enemy position has also created real counter-threats.

51 Rd1 Ree2
52 Qf3 Rxg2!
53 Qxc3 Rxh2+

Drawn by perpetual check.

Gligoric-Fischer
Bled, 1961



It appears that Black cannot avoid loss of material, without any compensation. But he nevertheless finds counterplay, offering a pawn sacrifice and forcing White to accept it.

19 ... a6!
20 Nbxd6 d3!!

Activating his 'King's Indian' bishop.

21 Qxd3 Bd4+
22 Kg2

Perhaps it would have been worth giving up the exchange for this 'central attacker' — 22 Rf2.

22 ... Nxg3!
23 Nxc8

23 hxg3 obviously allows mate in one move — 23 ... Qh3, while after 23 Nxg3 Qxd6 Black has more than sufficient counterplay for the pawn.

23 ... Nxf1
24 Nb6 Qc7!

The threat of mate in two moves does not allow White time for 25 Nxa8.

25 Rxf1 Qxb6
26 b4!

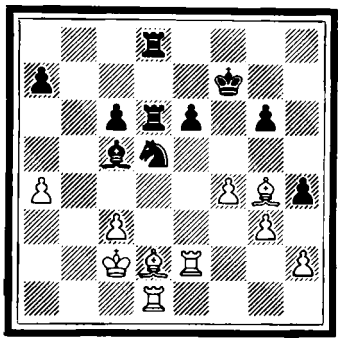
The roles have been reversed. Black is the exchange up, but it is now White who launches a counterattack by means of sacrifices.

26 ... Qxb4 27 Rb1 Qa5 28 Nxc5! Qxe5 29 Qxg6+ Bg7 30 Rxb7 Qd4 31 Bd3 Rf4 32 Qe6+ Kh8 33 Qg6

Draw agreed.

In the game **Razuvayev - Hübner,** USSR v Rest of the World, London, 1984, all Black's pawns are weak. In addition his king does not feel secure: the endgame is still a long way away. In this diffi-

cult position he seeks counterplay, having in mind a pawn sacrifice.



24 . . . Nf6!
25 Bf3 hxg3
26 hxg3 Rd3!
27 Rf1

In order to win 'without any trouble'. Playing for an attack would appear to have promised White more — 27 Bxc6 Rxg3 28 Rb1 Bb6 29 a5 Bxa5 30 Rb7+, but here one half of the pawn material would have disappeared from the board.

27 . . . Nh5!!

Agreeing to 28 Bxh5 gxh5 29 f5 e5 30 Bg5 R8d5 with counterchances *(31 c4 Rd7 32 Rxe5 Bb4)*.

28 Be1 Rd1!

Activity on every move! Now after the forcing 29 Re5 Nxg3 30 Bxd1 Nxf1 31 Rxc5 Ne3+ 32 Kb3 Rxd1 33 Bf2 White retains the advantage, but the position is simplified. Therefore he decides to win a pawn.

29 Bxh5 gxh5
30 f5 Ra1!
31 fxe6+ Ke8

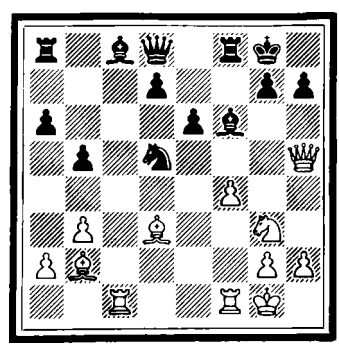
White has an extra pawn, but there is no win!

32 Re5 Rd5 33 Re4 Rdd1 34 Rf5 Rxe1 35 Rxe1 Rxe1 36 Rxc5 Rxe6 37 Rxh5 Rg6 38 Re5+ Kd7 39 Re3 a5 40 Rd3+ Kc7 41 Kb3

Here the game was adjourned and was not resumed. Draw agreed.

Olafsson-Tal

Candidates Tournament, Yugoslavia, 1959



Here too Black is in a critical position. Mate is threatened, and after 21 . . . h6 22 Be5 the threat of 23 Qg6 is extremely unpleasant. But by the sacrifice of a pawn he succeeds in seizing the

initiative. Apart, of course, from concrete variations, Tal considered there to be three factors providing motifs for counterplay. Firstly, 'the pieces must be able to breathe' (and in the diagram position they are obviously cramped). Secondly, on the capture of the pawn and the withdrawal of his pieces White will lose several tempi. Thirdly, a line is opened for a counterattack on the white king — the g-file. And, of course, the general principle of the unpromising nature of passive defence also remains valid in the given situation.

21 . . . g6!
22 Bxg6

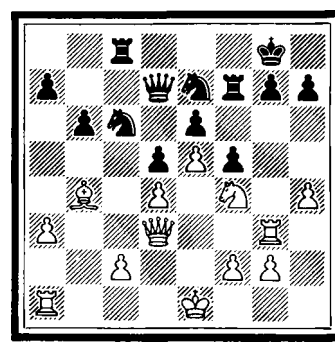
There is nothing else: if 22 Qe2, then 22 . . . Bxb2 and 23 . . . Nxf4.

22 . . . Qe7! 23 Bxf6 Nxf6 24 Qf3 Rb8 25 Bd3 Bb7 26 Qe2 Kh8, and after **27 Rce1 Rbe8 28 Nf5 Qb4 29 Qb2 Rc8! 30 Ng3 Qc3 31 Qe2 Rg8** Black developed a decisive offensive along the g-file.

And yet the 'patent' way of launching a counterattack must be considered not the sacrifice of a pawn, but of the exchange or of . . . the queen.

In the following example, on the idea of sacrificing the exchange Black created in advance an entire plan of launching a counterattack.

Hort-Petrosian
European Team Championship, Kapfenberg, 1970



After original play against the French Defence, White is ready for a determined attack on the king. Passive defence such as 18 . . . Kh8 would have left White with a serious initiative: h4-h5 Kd2, Rh1, with the theat of Ng6+ etc. Therefore the Ex-World Champion launches a counteroffensive, a consituent part of which is a sacrifice of the exchange.

18 . . . Nd8!

Clearing the way for the black rook to c4, so as then, with the support of the knight from c6, to begin breaking up White's bases on the 4th rank.

19 h5 Rc4
20 h6 Nec6
21 Nh5

Both sides consistently, without losing time, have carried out their plans. Now White has created an interesting, although transparent trap: on 21 . . . Rxd4 there follows 22 Rxg7+ Rxg7 *(22 . . . Kh8 23 Qg3)* 23 Nf6+ Kh8 24 Nxd7, and after 24 . . . Rxd3 White interposes the capture of the rook on g7 with check.

21 . . . g6
22 Nf6+ Rxf6

The entire plan of counter-attack was based on this: Black's pawns in the centre acquire mobility *(. . . e5!)*, and the opponent's king proves to be in danger.

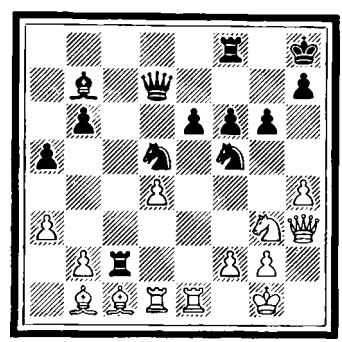
23 exf6 Nf7

The natural 23 . . . Nxd4 was possible, of course, but now in the event of 24 c3 e5! Black's attack flares up like a forest fire.

24 Qd2 Rxd4 25 Rd3 Rh4 26 Rh3 Rg4 27 Kf1 Nd6 28 Re1 Kf7 29 Bc3 Ne4 30 Qd3

If 30 Qe2, then 30 . . . Rf4! Strictly speaking, further commentary is simply unnecessary. It is readily apparent just how much Black has gained for the exchange, and even unhurried play brings him victory.

30 . . . Nc5 31 Qd1 Rc4 32 Bb2 b5 33 Qe2 Qd6 34 Kg1 Ne4 35 Rd3 Qc5 36 Rc1 e5 37 Qe3 d4 38 Qe2 Nxf6 39 Rdd1 Nd5 40 Qd2 e4 41 Qg5 Nc7 42 Rd2 Ne6 43 Qh4 a5 44 Rcd1 Rxc2 45 Rxc2 Qxc2 46 Rc1 Qxb2 47 Rxc6 d3 48 Ra6 Qd4 White resigns.



Given a quiet development of events, Black's position in the game **Nikolic - Ribli,** Portoroz/Ljubljana, 1985, gives cause for alarm: on 25 . . . Rc7 White gains an attack by 26 h5. Therefore the Hungarian grandmaster resorts to an exchange sacrifice for creating a counterattack. In his words, this was done under the impression of the best games of this type, played by ex-World Champion Tigran Petrosian.

25 . . . Rxc1!
26 Rxc1 Nf4

The first dividends from the 'invested capital': earlier the black knight could not even dream of this square.

27 Qg4 Nxg2
28 Red1 Nh6

In the alternative variation 28 . . . Nfxh4 29 d5 Bxd5 Black would also seem to have sufficient compensation for the exchange.

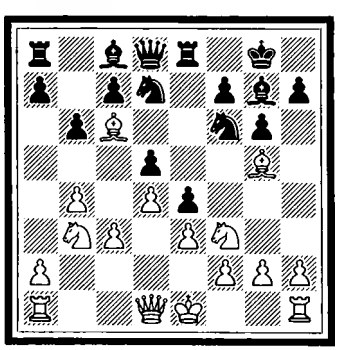
29 Qe2 Nf4
30 Qd2

After 30 Qe3 Nh3+ 31 Kf1 Ng4 Black wins, but 30 Qf1 came into consideration. Now the king is assailed by almost all the black pieces.

30 . . . e5
31 d5 Qh3
32 Be4 Ng4
33 Nf1 Qxh4
34 Bg2

The prosaic 34 . . . Nh3+ 35 Kg2 Nhxf2 was threatened.

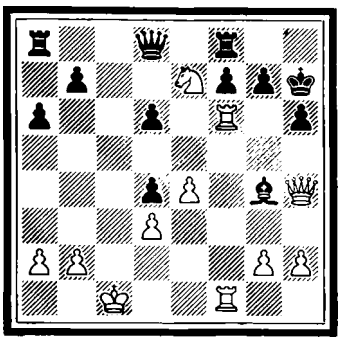
34 . . . Ba6 35 Re1 Bxf1 White resigns.



The game **Vaganian - Belyavsky,** 43rd USSR Championship, Yerevan, 1975, has only just emerged from the opening, and the position can be assessed by the term 'dynamic equilibrium'. Everything depends on the plans of the two sides, and Black's decision to go onto the defensive must be considered incorrect. After **11 . . . Rb8? 12 Nfd2 Bb7 13 Bxb7 Rxb7 14 b5! a6 15 a4 Ra7 16 O—O Qe7 17 Qe2 Rea8 18 a5! axb5 19 Qxb5 bxa5 20 Rxa5 Rxa5 21 Nxa5 c5 22 Nc6 Qf8 23 Nb3 c4 24 Nc5 Nxc5 25 dxc5** White gained a decisive advantage, and on move 39 even announced mate!

Meanwhile in the diagram position Black has the possibility of beginning a counter-attack by an exchange sacrifice. After 11 . . . exf3 12 Bxa8 fxg2 13 Rg1 h6! 14 Bxf6 (or *14 Bh4 g5 15 Bg3 Nf8 16 Bc6 Bg4 17 Qd2 Re6 18 Bb5 Bf3 19 Be2 g4* with more than sufficient compensation) 14 . . . Nxf6 15 Rxg2 Bg4 16 Rxg4 Nxg4 17 Qxg4 Qxa8 he would have restored the material balance and obtained a good game.

White's threats in the game **Tal - Portisch,** Niksic, 1983,



look extremely dangerous. The main one is 24 Rxh6+ gxh6 25 Rf6 with inevitable mate in a few moves. And counterplay against the white king appears to be too slow. For example, on 23 . . . Qc7+ 24 Kb1 Be2 White has the decisive 25 Nf5!!, while the more cunning 23 . . . Be2 loses after 24 Rxh6+ gxh6 25 Rf6 Qc7+ 26 Nc6!! (on *26 Kd2* Black has the saving manoeuvre *26 . . . Qa5+* and *27 . . . Qg5*) 26 . . . Qxc6+ 27 Kd2 d5 28 Qxh6+ Kg8 29 Rxc6 bxc6 30 Kxe2.

The Hungarian grandmaster finds a third way to obtain counterplay.

23	**. . .**	**Rc8+!**
24	**Nxc8**	**Qc7+!!**
25	**Kb1**	**Rxc8**

And it transpires that, with a pawn for the exchange, the open c-file, a threat of mate and his own king safeguarded, Black already stands better.

26	**R6f2**	**Be6**
27	**Qh5**	

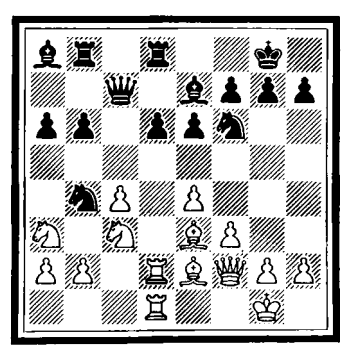
Virtually the only move in view of the threat of 27 . . . Qa5.

27	**. . .**	**b5**
28	**Qd1**	**Qa5**
29	**b3**	**Rc3**
30	**Rxf7**	

White is obliged to return the exchange, otherwise after 30 . . . b4 and 31 . . . Qa3 the a-pawn advances.

30	**. . .**	**Bxf7**
31	**Rxf7**	**Qa3**
32	**Qf1**	**Rc5**
33	**Rf5**	**Rc7**

The position is roughly equal, and on move 37 a draw was agreed.



In the game **Dieks - Marjanovic,** World Junior Championship, Manila, 1974, an exchange sacrifice lies at the basis of Black's counter-attack, but it begins with a

classic counterblow in the centre.

17 . . . d5!
18 cxd5 exd5
19 e5

White fails to sense the danger, otherwise he would have reconciled himself to full equality after the simplifying exchanges 19 exd5 Nfxd5 20 Nxd5 Rxd5 21 Rxd5 Bxd5. The move in the game is made with the hope of gaining an advantage.

19 . . . Qxe5
20 Bxb6

Intending after 20 . . . Rd7 to continue 21 Bd4, blockading the black pawn in the centre and beginning a seige. But . . .

20 . . . Rxb6!
21 Qxb6 Nd7
22 Qa5 Rb8!

The defence of the knight at b4 is reassigned to the rook, and 23 . . . Bd8 24 Qa4 Nc5, trapping the queen, is threatened.

23 Nc2 Bg5!

Now in the above variation White would have given up his queen for rook and knight *(24 Qxb4)*, retaining a material advantage and simplifying the position somewhat.

24 Nxb4 Bxd2
25 Bf1

Of course, 25 Rxd2 was bad because of 25 . . . Qe3+, but White should perhaps have sought salvation in the complications after 25 Nbxd5. Passive defence allows Black to build up an irresistible attack.

25 . . . Be3+
26 Kh1 Bb6
27 Qxa6 Bc7
28 g3 d4
29 Be2

29 Ne4 Bxe4 30 fxe4 Rxb4 31 Qc8+ Nf8 would have led to the loss of a piece, but now too material losses are inevitable.

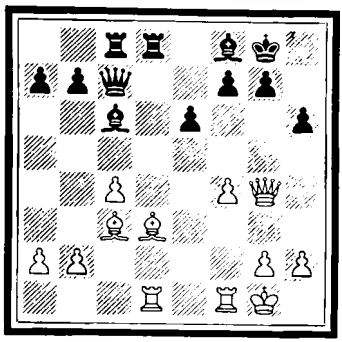
29 . . . Nf8! 30 Qc4 dxc3 31 bxc3 Re8 32 Rd2 Bxf3+ White resigns.

These examples strikingly demonstrate the effectiveness of the exchange sacrifice when launching a counterattack. Such a procedure has been systematically employed by many grandmasters.

The following game extract teaches one not to begrudge the exchange, if it is sacrificed for a centralized enemy piece.

Maroczy-Rubinstein
Carlsbad, 1907

White's pieces are aimed at the black king position, and



after f4-f5 the attack may prove decisive. Therefore . . .

21	. . .	**Rxd3!**
22	**Rxd3**	**Be4**
23	**Rd2**	**Qxc4**

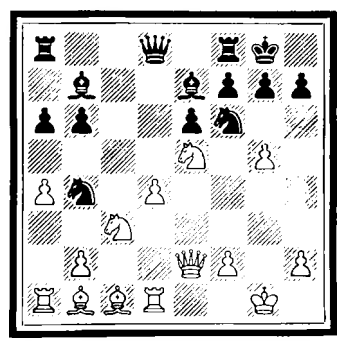
As we see, it is all very simple, provided only that the very idea of sacrificing the exchange ceases to seem somehow exceptional to a player. Now not a trace of White's attack remains, and the black bishops, especially the light-square one, are about to begin controlling the entire board.

24	**Rfd1**	**Bd5**
25	**h3**	**f5**
26	**Qg6**	**Qxf4**
27	**Rxd5!**	

Black's plans include the preparation of . . . Bd6, and returning the exchange is White's only chance of forestalling the growing counter-attack. In passing he sets a little trap: 27 . . . exd5 loses to 28 Qe6+ and 29 Qxc8.

27 . . . Qe3+ 28 Kh1 exd5 29 Qxf5 Rd8 31 Rxd5, and the game soon ends in a draw.

In general it should be borne in mind that, if by an exchange sacrifice one succeeds in obtaining the advantage of the two bishops, this very often leads to the seizure of the initiative. It is no accident that one chess saying runs: "Knights were made for defence, and bishops for attack".



For example, in the game **Bogoljubow - Grünfeld,** Baden Baden, 1925, Black's position gives serious cause for alarm.

White's bishops and queen are ready to assail the opponent's king. If the attacked knight moves to d5, which suggests itself, then after Ne4 White will bring his rook from a1 into the attack along the 3rd rank. Black's only (and

sufficient) counterplay involves an exchange sacrifice. Note that it is Black's command of this procedure which allows him to base on it his entire system of defence and counterattack.

17 ... Ne8!
18 Ne4 Rc8!
19 Ra3 g6

Black is engaged in parrying concrete threats (in particular, *Nf6+* followed by *Bxh7+* etc.), and simultaneously he gradually prepares to carry out his plan.

20 Rg3 Ng7
21 Nf6+

This seems very strong, since 21 ... Bxf6 22 gxf6 Qxf6 fails to 23 Bg5, while in the event of 22 ... Nf5 23 Bxf5 exf5 White by 24 Qd2 gains an important tempo by attacking the b4 knight, and after 24 ... Nd5 25 Qh6 Qxf6 26 Nd7 he wins the exchange. But the time for the counter-offensive is now ripe.

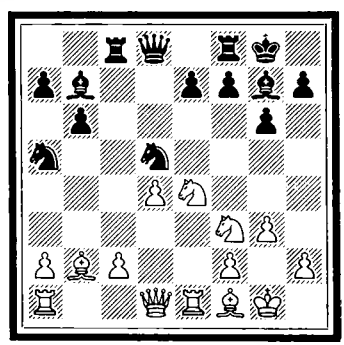
21 ... Bxf6 22 gxf6 Qd5! 23 f3 Rxc1! 24 Rxc1 Qxd4+ 25 Kf1 Nh5 26 Rg4 Qd6

Although on the board there are still many pieces, the outcome of the game is decided: the initiative is with Black, the white king is 'bare', and White has no visible trumps.

27 Be4 Bxe4
28 Qxe4 Nxf6
29 Qxb4 Qxe5

For the exchange Black now has two pawns, and the knight at d5 is worth not less than a rook. Grünfeld soon converted his advantage into a win.

In this connection a mistake made in the game **Kostantinopolsky - Levenfish,** Kuibyshev, 1943, was highly instructive.



After losing the opening battle (backward c-pawn, weak square at c4, and in the event of his f1 bishop being exchanged — the yawning a8-h1 diagonal), White made a move which provoked his opponent into making a mistake.

16 Rc1(!) Bh6??

A fundamentally incorrect decision. For the exchange

White obtains the two bishops (about which we have already talked) and at a single stroke he eliminates all the defects of his position. Incidentally, it is now Black's a1-h8 diagonal which 'cracks'. The consistent 16 . . . Nc4 was essential.

17 c4! Bxc1
18 Qxc1 Kg7

Already the active 19 Qh6 was threatened.

19 Ne5 Nf6
20 d5

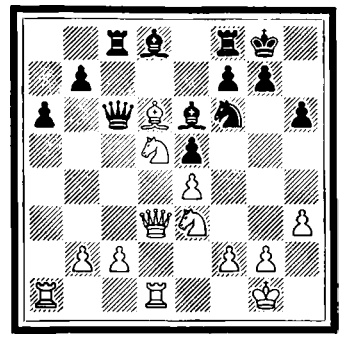
It is time to take stock. White's dark-square bishop, which has no opponent, is playing a significantly more important role than either of the black rooks. 21 Ng4 is threatened with decisive pressure on he f6 and h6 squares. In a word, White's counterplay is worth much more than the exchange.

20 . . . h5 21 Qf4 Kh7 22 Nxf6+ exf6 23 Nd7! Qxd7 24 Qxf6 Rg8 25 Re7, and within a few moves White won.

And now another example on the same theme.

Hort-Polugayevsky
Vinkovci, 1976

Had White all the time remembered about the possible exchange sacrifice for the



two bishops and a counter-attack, he would hardly have gone in for the diagram position. True, at first sight it seems to promise him a healthy extra pawn *(20 . . . Re8 21 Bxe5),* but . . .

20 . . . Bxd5!

By an exchange sacrifice Black seizes the initiative.

21 Bxf8 Bxe4
22 Qa3 Bb6
23 Be7 Nh5

The character of the play has very obviously changed. Almost all Black's pieces are aimed at the position of the white king; what more compensation could the counter-attacking side want for the exchange?!

24 Rd6!

Blocking the path of the black queen to g6, White mobilizes his forces for defence.

24 . . . Qc7

25 Rad1 Bd4
26 c3

Of course, it was essential to return the exchange — 26 Rxd4 exd4 27 Rxd4, getting rid of one of the black bishops. Now the attack becomes decisive.

26 . . . Bxe3
27 Rd8+ Kh7!
28 fxe3 Qb6
29 Kf2

The rook is obviously immune because of mate in three moves.

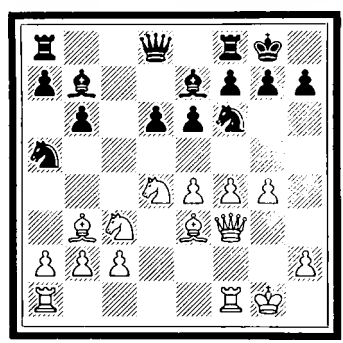
29 . . . Rxd8 30 Bxd8 Qg6 31 g4 Nf6 32 Rg1 Bc6 33 Bxf6 Qc2+ 34 Kg3 Qe2

Even White's extra rook cannot save him. A curious mate follows after 35 Bh4 Qxe3+ 36 Kh2 Qf4+, and if 37 Bg3 Qd2+, or 37 Rg3 Qf2+.

35 Bxg7 Qxe3+ 36 Kh4 Kxg7 37 Qe7 Qxg1 38 Qxe5+ f6 White resigns.

And, of course, it is necesary to know those typical opening patterns, where Black's counterplay is based entirely on an exchange sacrifice. In particular the Sicilian Defence, where a black rook is sacrificed for the knight at c3 which supports White's pawn centre and controls the important central squares e4 and d5. It is sufficient to say that nowadays the exchange sacrifice on c3 is very common; it occurs in the Dragon Variation, and in certain lines of the Schenen-ingen Variation, the Sozin Attack and other lines. Here are a few examples, the first of which can be considered a classic.

Padevsky- Botvinnik
Moscow Olympiad, 1956



12 . . . Rc8!

Intending by an exchange sacrifice to parry the opponent's flank offensive.

13 g5 Rxc3!
14 bxc3

Better was 14 gxf6 Rxe3 15 Qxe3 (after *15 fxe7 Rxf3 16 exd8=Q Rxf1+* White is simply a pawn down) 15 . . . Bxf6, but even here 16 Rad1 Nxb3 17 axb3 a6, with the idea of placing the queen at c7, the rook at e8, and preparing the

opening of the position by . . . e5, led to an advantage for Black in the game Rubezov-Borisenko, correspondence, 1960-61. Indeed, the weakness of White's kingside and the opponent's two excellent bishops make his task of realizing his exchange advantage rather difficult.

14 . . .	**Nxe4**
15 Qg4	**Qc8**
16 Rf3	**Nxb3**
17 axb3	**f5**

Launching a decisive counteroffensive: on 18 gxf6 Black replies 18 . . . Rxf6 with the threat of 19 . . . Rg6.

18 Qh4	**e5**
19 Rh3	**h6**
20 Qh5	**Qxc3!**
21 Rd1	**exd4**

The possible 22 gxh6 is parried by 22 . . . dxe3, when g7 is defended by the queen.

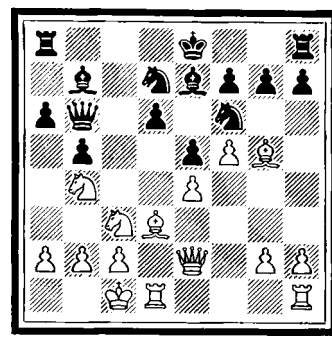
22 Bd2	**Qc6!**
23 gxh6	**Ng5**

'Merely' threatening mate at g2.

24 Rg3 Qh1+ 25 Kf2 Ne4+ White resigns.

In the next example the exchange sacrifice on c3 enables Black to carry out a breakthrough at a point where, without the sacrifice, it was impossible.

Spassky-Polugayevsky
27th USSR Championship
Leningrad, 1960



After his last move 13 O—O—O White is all prepared for the standard advance of his g-pawn, and if Black succumbs to the natural desire to take his king to safety as quickly as possible — 13 . . . O—O, he immediately loses the battle for the d5 square *(14 g4!*, followed by *Bxf6, g4-g5* and *Ncd5)*, and then also the game. Therefore he pins his hopes on counter-attack.

13 . . . Rc8!

This move deserves an exclamation mark, for the reason that Black also had another quite acceptable continuation: 13 . . . a5 14 Be3, and now either 14 . . . Qd8 15 Nbd5 Bxd5 16 Nxd5 Nxd5 17 exd5 b4, or else the very sharp 14 . . . axb4 15

Bxb6 bxc3 16 Bxb5 Rxa2 17 bxc3 O—O. But Black plans an exchange sacrifice, intending to further strengthen his counterattack with a breakthrough in the centre.

14 Bxf6 Nxf6
15 g4

Evidently White should have reconciled himself to having no advantage and played 15 Nbd5. But perhaps he simply underestimated the sacrifice and the opponent's subsequent counterattack.

15 . . . Qa5
16 a3 Rxc3
17 bxc3 d5!

Also including both black bishops in the attack. With the capture on c3 Black need not hurry.

18 exd5 O—O!

It turns out that 19 Kb2 does not defend anything because of 19 . . . Nxd5, when the threat of 20 . . . Nxc3 is extremely unpleasant.

19 Qxe5 Qxa3+
20 Kb1

20 Kd2 would have failed to 20 . . . Bxb4 21 cxb4 Qxb4+ 22 c3 Qb2+ 23 Bc2 Rd8, when White has no defence.

20 . . . Bxb4
21 cxb4 Nxd5?

Throwing away the good winning chances which Black would have had after the correct 21 . . . Qxb4+ 22 Qb2 Qc5, when even after the strongest 23 c4! bxc4! 24 Qxb7 Qd6!! 25 Bxc4 (White loses after *25 Ka2 Rb8 26 Qc6 Qb4*) 25 . . . Rb8 26 Qxb8+ Qxb8+ 27 Ka2 Qb4 28 Bb3 Ne4 the white d5 pawn is securely blockaded, whereas the black pawn is ready to advance.

These variations confirm the correctness of the sacrifice for the sake of a counterattack, and it is in no way compromised by the drawn outcome after **22 Qb2 Nc3+ 23 Kc1 Na2+.**

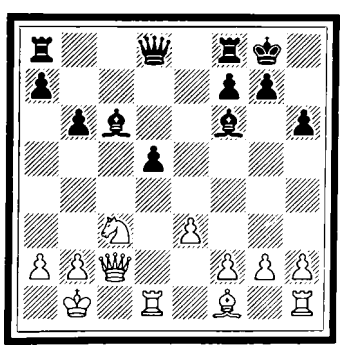
Despite its paradoxical nature, the sacrifice of the queen for the launching of a counterattack can also be called typical. Opportunities for carrying it out occur fairly often in practice, and therefore it is very important to instil in oneself the very idea of such a sacrifice. And if in addition a player becomes acquainted with certain features, which enable a counterattack to be begun with a queen sacrifice, then he will add another formidable weapon to his chess arsenal.

However, the queen sacrifice for the sake of a counter-

attack should not be confused with the queen sacrifice which simply enables the opponent's attack to be eliminated, with the material balance being retained or even a material advantage gained, as was examined earlier in chapter 4. Here we are talking about a queen sacrifice in the full sense of the word, i.e. with a clear disruption of the material balance on the board.

Here is virtually the simplest example of this.

Sokolsky-Vasiliev
Leningrad, 1947



15 Nxd5 Bxd5
16 Bc4

Reckoning on winning a pawn, but overlooking the opponent's counterattacking possibility.

16 . . . Bxc4!

17 Rxd8 Raxd8!

Had he interposed 17 . . . Bxa2+?, Black would have reduced his material deficit, but it was not for this that he parted with his queen. A rook on the 2nd rank plus the attacking bishop at f6 are of more significance than a pawn!

18 Qxc4 Rd2
19 b4

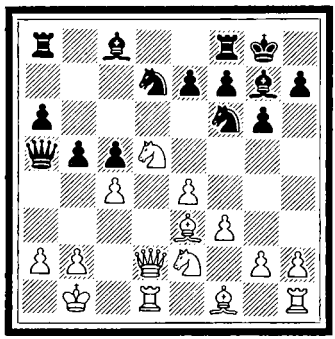
On finding himself in the position of defender, White loses his head. After 19 Re1 Rxb2+ 20 Kc1 Rxf2 21 Re2 he could still have resisted.

19 . . . Rfd8 20 Re1 b5! 21 Qxb5 Rc8 White resigns.

Thus an important motif for a queen sacrifice is a counter-attack on the enemy king, which is often conducted with the help of a long-range bishop and a rook operating along open lines (the Sokolsky - Vasiliev game given above can serve as a prototype).

Counterattacks of this type are fairly complicated and are not restricted by forcing variations. Even so, a knowledge of the motifs and typical positions can facilitate the finding of a queen sacrifice as a means of switching from defence to attack.

Zamikhovsky-Nezhmetdinov
Kharkov, 1956



In playing 12 Nd5 White was naturally reckoning on 12 . . . Qd8, but there followed the unexpected **12 . . . Nxd5!! 13 Qxa5**

By declining the sacrifice — 13 exd5 or 13 cxd5, White would have lost his opening advantage, and Black would have obtained at least an equal game.

13 . . . Nxe3

Only two pieces for the queen! But the rook is attacked, and if it moves (for example, *14 Rd3*), then after 14 . . . Nxc4 15 Qe1(c7) Nxb2 Black adds two pawns to his two pieces and gains a very strong attack.

When he began the combination, Black also calculated the variation 14 Rxd7 Bxd7 15 Qd2 with an attack on two pieces. But firstly, the simple 15 . . . Nxf1 16 Rxf1 Be6 retains the initiative for Black with a material balance of rook and bishop for queen. And secondly, by 15 . . . Nxc4! he can force his opponent to find a series of best moves leading to perpetual check, namely: 16 Qxd7 Rad8 17Qxe7 Rd1+ 18 Nc1 *(18 Kc2* fails to *18 . . . Rd2+ 19 Kb1 Rfd8* with a winning attack) 18 . . . Bh6 19 Bxc4! Rxh1 20 Bxf7+! Rxf7 21 Qe8+ Kg7 22 Qe5+.

It was for this reason, evidently, that White decided to give up the exchange immediately, thus getting rid of the excessively active black knight.

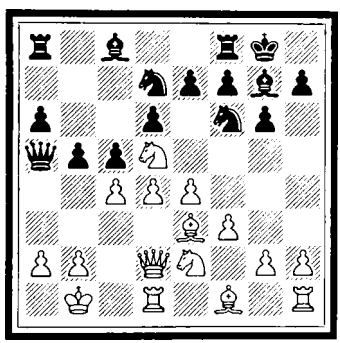
14 Rc1 Nxc4 15 Rxc4 bxc4 16 Nc3 Rb8 17 Bxc4 Ne5 18 Be2 Be6 19 Rd1

Though still slightly behind in material, nevertheless Black completely holds the initiative. He could now have strengthened his counter-attack by playing 19 . . . Nc6, and if 20 Qa3 *(20 Qxc5* or *20 Qxa6* is fatal, since the second black rook too obtains an open file) 20 . . . Nb4.

But Black lost the thread and played **19 . . . Bc4? 20 Rd2! Nc6 21 Qa3,** after which a draw was agreed.

Not long afterwards,

familiarity with this idea enabled the young Mikhail Tal to carry out a similar counterattack in the game **Bobotsov - Tal,** World Student Team Championship, Varna, 1958.



Here too White's last move was 11 Nd5, on which there followed:

11 . . . Nxd5!?
12 Qxa5 Nxe3
13 Rc1 Nxc4

Tal himself assessed this position as double-edged, but nevertheless fairly promising for Black. In his opinion, White should have tried to hold the d4 point by any means possible, to prevent the opponent from including in the attack his g7 bishop which now has no opponent. But Bobotsov, after getting rid of the annoying knight by a correct exchange sacrifice, then chose an incorrect plan.

14 Rxc4 bxc4
15 Nc1

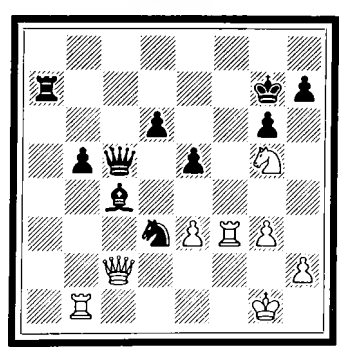
The immediate 15 Qd2 came into consideration, followed by g2-g3 and the development of the bishop at g2 (or in some cases at h3),

15 . . . Rb8 16 Bxc4 Nb6 17 Bb3 Bxd4 18 Qd2 Bg7 19 Ne2 c4 20 Bc2 c3

The remainder does not require any commentary. Black's counterattack is rapidly gathering pace, and the outcome of the game is already clear.

21 Qd3 cxb2 22 Nd4 Bd7 23 Rd1 Rfc8 24 Bb3 Na4 25 Bxa4 Bxa4 26 Nb3 Rc3 27 Qxa6 Bxb3 28 axb3 Rbc8 29 Qa3 Rc1+ 30 Rxc1 Rxc1+ White resigns.

Portisch-Forintos
Budapest, 1971



With two pawns for the exchange, Black is very actively placed. But his king

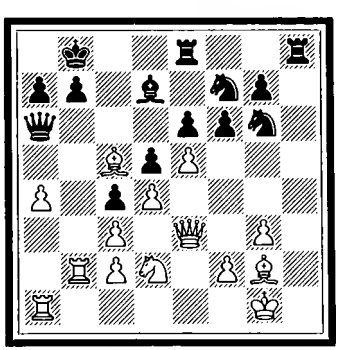
is not too secure, and with a brilliant queen sacrifice White begins a counterattack.

39 Qxd3!! Bxd3
40 Ne6+ Kh6
41 g4!!

The point. Now the rook at b1 remains alive.

41 ... g5
42 Rf6+ Bg6
43 Nxc5 dxc5
44 Rxb5

White now has the advantage, although against accurate play by the opponent he would not have managed to realize it. But on move 61 Black blundered and two moves later he resigned. The technical struggle in the endgame does not bear any direct relation to our theme . . .



In the game **Bjerring - Marszalek,** Primorsko, 1974, White was tempted by the combination **26 Nxc4,** intending on 26 . . . dxc4 to reply 27 Qe4 with a very strong attack *(27 . . . b6 28 Bd6+ Nxd6 29 exd6,* and no defence against the mate is apparent).

26 ... Qxc4!!

Having discovered the motif for a counterattack, Black sacrifices his queen. In return he obtains domination of the long light-square diagonal and a mass of threats, including mating ones.

27 Bf1 Bc6!
28 Bxc4 dxc4
29 f3 Ng5
30 Bxa7+?

It was time for White by 30 Bd6+ (not for attacking purposes, but for defending the e5 pawn) 30 . . . Ka8 31 Rf1 to switch to a difficult defence. By still thinking in terms of attacking he quickly loses.

30 ... Ka8
31 d5 Bxd5
32 Qb6

In the hope of going to a5.

32 ... Nxf3+
33 Kf2 Rh2+
34 Ke3

Or 34 Kf1 Nd2+ 35 Ke1 Bf3 36 Qe3 Reh8.

34 ... Ngxe5
35 g4

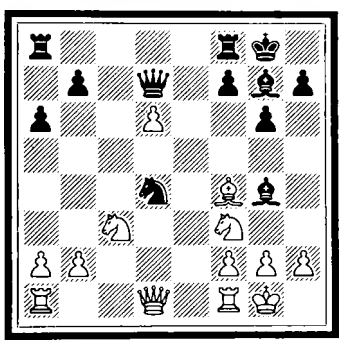
Mate in three moves was threatened: 35 . . . Ng4+ 36

Kf4 g5+ 37 Kxg4 f5.

35 ... g5 36 Rg1 Nxg1 White resigns.

Nevertheless, a counter-attack on the king is not the only motif for a queen sacrifice for the sake of counterplay.

Bronstein-Schnizel
Sandomierz, 1976



For the pawn Black has more than sufficient compensation, and he is now threatening to assail the opponent's kingside. For example, after 17 Nd5 Bxf3! 18 gxf3 Qh3 19 Bg3 Qh5 20 Kg2 Rad8 21 Nf4 (or *21 Ne7+ Kh8*, with the threat of . . . *f5-f4)* 21 . . . Qf5 Black has a serious initiative. Therefore with a queen sacrifice White launches a counterattack.

17 Qxd4! Bxd4
18 Nxd4

Preparing dangerous play on the dark squares after 19 Nd5. Delay will be fatal, and so Black strives for a counter-attack. His aim is to chase the dark-square bishop.

18 ... g5!
19 Bg3 f5
20 Be5 Rae8
21 Rfe1 Rxe5!

By returning the exchange, Black gets rid of the d6 pawn and of the opponent's pressure on the dark squares. Moreover, his slight material advantage retains for him the better chances.

22 Rxe5 Qxd6
23 Rd5 Qb4?!

Black should have aimed for the exchange of rooks by 23 . . . Qf6! 24 h3 *(24 Rd7 does* not work in view of *24 . . . f4)* 24 . . . Rd8! 25 hxg4 Rxd5 26 Bxd5 Qxd4 27 Ne7+ Kf7 with a favourable ending. In the middlegame, by contrast, White's pieces are of equivalent worth to the black queen.

24 Nb3 Bh5
25 Re1 Bf7
26 Rd4!

This is stronger than 26 Rxf5 Bxb3 27 Rxg5+ Kh8 28 axb3 Qxb3, when with material level Black has the prospect of creating a passed pawn on the queenside.

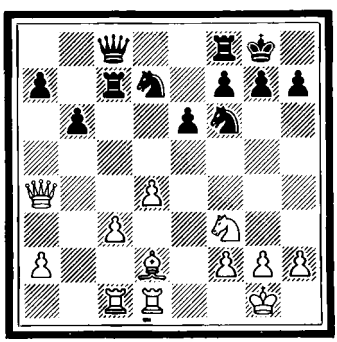
26 ... Qb6
27 Nd5 Bxd5

28 Rxd5 Qc6
29 Red1 Qf6
30 R5d2

A somewhat demonstrative emphasizing of the resulting equality. Also possible was 30 R1d2 (but not *30 Nd4? Rd8 31 Rxf5?? Rxd4*).

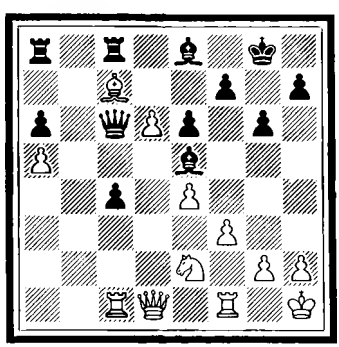
30 . . . b6 31 Nc1 f4 32 f3 Re8 33 Ne2 b5 34 Nc3 Qb6+ 35 Kf1 b4 36 Ne4 Re7 37 h3 Kg7 38 b3 h6 Draw agreed.

What would you have played?



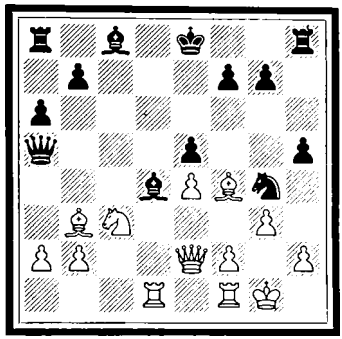
No. 48

In principle Black has successfully solved his opening problems: he has almost completed the mobilization of his forces and has no obvious weaknesses. Even so, White intends to advance c3-c4, after which he will control the greater part of the centre and with an active bishop will have a slight advantage. Does Black have a possibility of seizing the initiative?



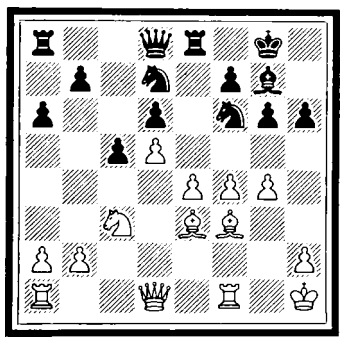
No. 49

Black's pieces are unharmoniously placed, and his rooks have practically no moves. How should he continue?



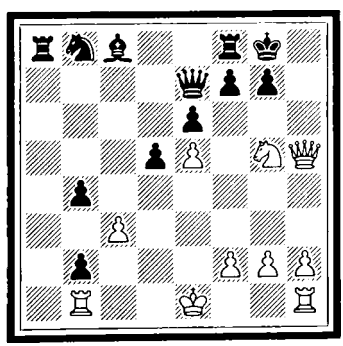
No. 50

Black's pieces are clearly aimed at the white king's position. With his last move 17 . . . e5 he has simultaneously supported his bishop at d4 and, by defending his knight, prepared . . . h4. Assess the position. What can be recommended for White?



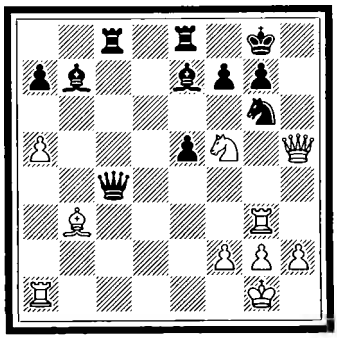
No. 51

The position is full of life and abounding in possibilities for both sides. Black plans a counteroffensive on the queenside with . . . b5, whereas White is conducting an attack on the king. To intensify the onslaught he chose **15 g5 hxg5 16 e5,** reckoning on 16 . . . dxe5 17 fxg5 Nh7 18 Ne4 with very strong pressure for the pawn. Is this idea correct, and how can Black counter it?



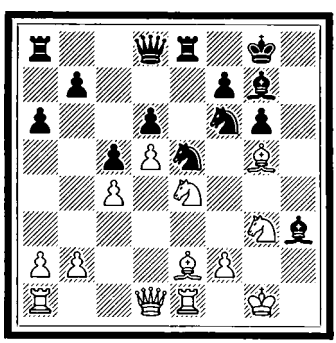
No. 52

It stands to reason that in this position it is Black to move . . .



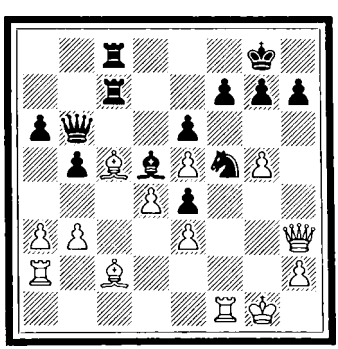
No. 53

By 35 Bb3 White has attacked the black queen and created — after it moves — the terrible threat of capturing on g6 with a rapid mate. On what factor can Black's defence be based?



No. 54

White has given up a pawn, but has created an unpleasant pin on the knight, which she intends to reinforce by Qc1-f4. But Black unexpectedly changed the course of events. How?



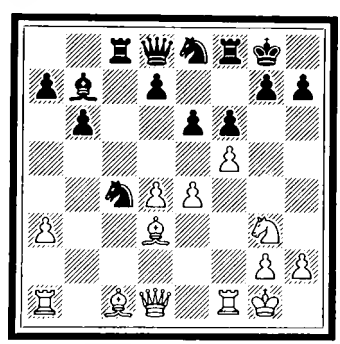
No. 55

White stands actively? After all, even the queen's rook will be able to switch to the kingside after the bishop moves from c2 . . . What then should Black do?

17
When the hunter becomes the victim

It stands to reason that a counterattack cannot be begun out of nothing and without any basis. Its objective may be weak points incurred by the attacking side in the course of his offensive, or a change in the dynamic strength of the two sides' pieces as a result of a sacrifice, or — the most usual — an advantage in force acquired on a certain part of the board by the defending side. One of the best ways of assisting the latter is by decoying the attacking pieces into the depths of the opponent's position. As though drawing the enemy fire, in this way the defending side creates the preconditions for a counterattack on the part of the board which the opponent's pieces have left. Of course, this procedure can be compared with a circus tightrope walker, but firstly, in modern-day chess it is almost impossible in general to avoid risk and to win without 'bloodshed', and secondly, such a counterattack promises success against the most strong and experienced opponents.

One of the most brilliant examples of a counterattack based on the theme of decoy was given by ex-World champion Max Euwe in the game **Geller - Euwe,** Candidates Tournament, Zurich 1953.



16 Rf4

An obvious and natural strengthening of the attack. Now White requires only two moves to switch his queen and rook to the h-file, after which it appears that nothing will be able to save the black king.

16 . . . b5!

It is clear that any defensive measures on the kingside are doomed to failure, since Black's queen and rook are very restricted. But he has a counterattack! It is not without basis: his knight at c4, bishop at b7 and rook at c8 all stand well, and with the move in the game his queen comes into play. But even so the counterattack might have been too late, had not Black already planned a decoy sacrifice.

17 Rh4 Qb6
18 e5

For the moment White's queen cannot go to h5 because of the attack on d4, and so he defends the d4 pawn with his rook, simultaneously clearing the way for his light-square bishop.

18 ... Nxe5
19 fxe6 Nxd3
20 Qxd3 Qxe6
21 Qxh7+ Kf7
22 Bh6

Thus at the cost of only a pawn White has broken through and has begun pursuing the opponent's king. But . . .

22 ... Rh8!!

The main tactical blow of the entire counterattack, begun on move 16. The white queen finds itself 'off-side' and loses control of the c2 square.

23 Qxh8 Rc2

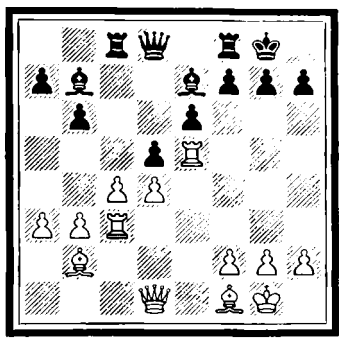
Threatening mate in a few moves: 24 . . . Rxg2+ 25 Kf1 Qc4+ etc. Several months of painstaking analysis, which attracted the strongest players in the world, enabled it to be established that by a series of very difficult moves White could have avoided an immediate debacle. He should have played 24 d5, and if 24 . . . Qb6+ 25 Kh1 Qf2 26 Rg1 Bxd5 27 Re4!, while if immediately 24 . . . Bxd5, then not 25 Rd4, but only 25 Rd1! And here after 25 . . . Rxg2+ 26 Kf1 gxh6 neither 27 Rxh6 nor 27 Rxd5 works, but only 27 Qxh6, after which Black, with two pawns for the exchange, nevertheless retains the better chances in view of the white king's open position.

Need it be said that at the board it was practically impossible for Geller to find all these moves. There now followed:

24 Rc1 Rxg2+ 25 Kf1 Qb3 26 Ke1 Qf3 White resigns.

It is quite possible that it was this brilliant counterattack which guided Vasily

Smyslov, also in Zurich, in the game **Keres - Smyslov.**



17 ... Bf6
18 Rh5

Commencing a direct attack and immediately threatening 19 Rxh7 Kxh7 20 Qh5+ Kg8 21 Rh3 Bh4 22 Rxh4 f5 23 Qh7+ with a rapid win.

18 ... g6
19 Rch3

"I thought for a long time", Smyslov later recounted, "I very much wanted to take the rook, especially since I did not see how White could win here".

And yet the future World Champion's intuition did not betray him, when at this point he pinned his hopes not on the winning of material, but on a counterattack, based on the diversion from the centre of White's heavy pieces stuck on the rook's file.

After the game it was shown that 19 . . . gxh5 20 Qxh5 Re8 21 a4!! with the threat of Ba3 would have given White an irresistible attack.

19 ... dxc4!!
20 Rxh7 c3!

The first 'dividend' from the decoy of the white rook to h7: the c3 pawn cannot be taken — 21 Bxc3? Rxc3. And if the bishop retreats — 21 Bc1, then 21 . . . Qxd4.

But White continues attacking.

21 Qc1!

"Beware of Greeks, bearing gifts!" If 21 . . . cxb2, then 22 Qh6 Qxd4 23 Rh8+ Bxh8 24 Qh7 mate.

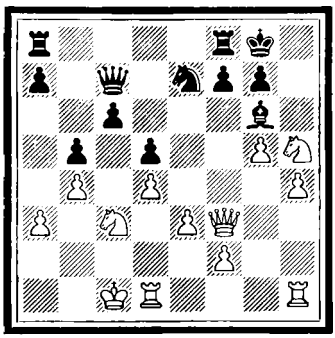
21 ... Qxd4!
22 Qh6 Rfd8!

Consistent, in the spirit of counterattack. The white rooks are destined to remain spectators to the end of the game.

23 Bc1 Bg7 24 Qg5 Qf6 26 Qg4 c2 26 Be2 Rd4 27 f4 Rd1+ 28 Bxd1 Qd4+ White resigns.

Miles-Portisch
Reggio Emilia, 1985

White has just won a pawn at h5. But his knight and the queen defending it are now



diverted to the right flank, and this provides the basis for a rapid counterattack by Black on the enemy king.

20 ... a5
21 Kb2 axb4
22 axb4 c5!!
23 dxc5

On 23 bxc5 Black wins immediately by 23 . . . Qa5.

23 ... Nc6!

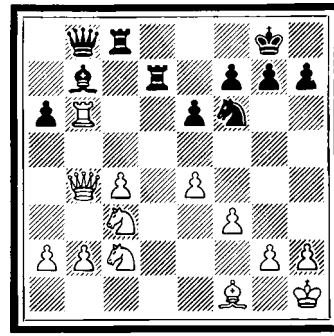
It transpires that 24 Kb3 Nxb4! and 24 Nxd5 Qe5+ 25 Nc3 Ra2+! 26 Kxa2 Qxc3 are equally bad.

24 Qf4 Ne5!
25 Nf6+

Or 25 Nxd5 Qa7! 26 Qxe5 Qa2+ 27 Kc3 Ra3+.

25 . . . gxf6 26 Kb3 Nc4! 27 Ra1 Qxf4 28 exf4 Nd2+ 29 Kb2 Rfd8 30 Nxb5 Rab8

Black is ahead on material and has retained his attack, and he went on to win.



Apart from two pawns, White also has quite sufficient positional compensation for the exchange in the game **Suetin - Kuzmin,** Sochi, 1970, but he failed to take account of the fact that his main forces are as though 'stuck' on the queenside. For this reason the seemingly strong move **26 e5** was in fact a mistake.

26 ... Qxe5!

By giving up a piece, Black creates an advantage in force on the decisive part of the battlefield.

27 Rxb7 Rd2
28 Qb3

Alas, the previously intended 28 Nd5 Rxc2 *(28 . . . Rd1 29 Nde3 Rb1 30 Qe7 Rf8 31 Qc7)* 29 Ne7+ Kh8 30 Nxc8 Rc1 would have led to the checkmating of . . . the white king.

28 ... h5

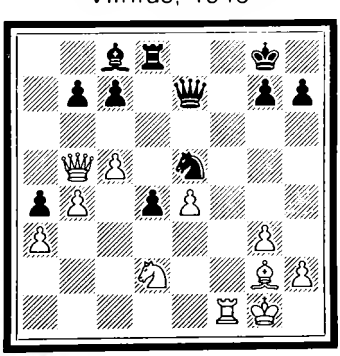
29 Ne4

29 c5 came into consideration, trying at the cost of a pawn to bring the pseudo-active rook back into play.

29 . . . Nxe4 30 fxe4 Qf4! 31 Ne3 Rcd8 32 Qc3 Qf2 33 h3 h4 34 Kh2 Qf4+ 35 Kg1 R8d3 36 Qa5 Qxe3+ 37 Kh1 f5 White resigns.

A counterattack based on decoy does not always flare up in reply to an attack on the king. It does not matter to where the enemy pieces are decoyed, provided only that they lose the possibility of controlling that part of the board which is intended as the bridgehead for the counterattack. We give some examples of how the strongest piece — the queen — can be decoyed to where it cannot participate in parrying a counterattack.

Pruun–Simagin
Vilnius, 1946



P-ADC—O

White's position seems by no means bad. The breakway a4 pawn is attacked, and after 29 . . . Qd7 30 Qxd7 the initiative will most probably be with White: 30 . . . Bxd7 31 Rb1.

But Black resorts to decoying.

29 . . . Bd7!
30 Qxb7

Falling in with the opponent's wishes. 30 Qe2 was better, although 30 . . . Qg5 again gives Black a wealth of possibilities.

30 . . . Bc6
31 Qa6 d3!

Thus the queen is trapped. And while White is saving it from the threat of 32 . . . Ra8, Black's counterattack will flare up.

32 Rf5 Qd7!
33 Rxe5 Qd4+
34 Kf1

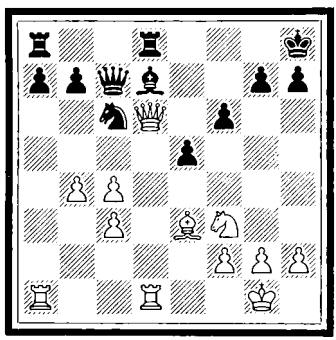
No better is 34 Kh1 Qxe5 35 Qxc6 Qg5 36 Qe6+ Kh8 37 Qa2 Rf8 38 Bf3 Qe3 39 Kg2 g5 40 h3 h5 41 g4 h4, when there is no defence against . . . Qe1-g3+.

34 . . . Qxe5 35 Qxc6 Qa1+ 36 Kf2 Qd4+ 37 Kf1 Rf8+ 38 Bf3 Qe3 39 Qd5+ Kh8 40 e5 Qxd2 41 e6 Qe2+

The time control had now been reached, but White did

not bother to adjourn the game . . .

Taimanov–Tal
24th USSR Championship
Moscow, 1957



The future World Champion so arranged his defence, that White could not refrain from invading with his queen at d6. The following, highly unpleasant reply makes it clear that the white queen will no longer be able to reach the kingside, where Black is about to attack.

18 . . . Qc8!
19 b5

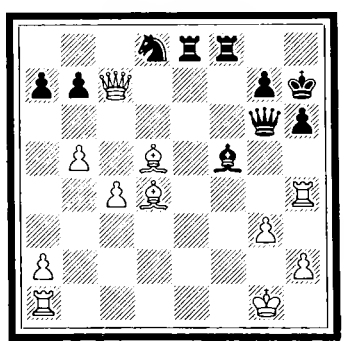
19 Qd2 is also unattractive because of 19 . . . Bg4.

19 . . . Bh3!

The counterattack begins, and does not require any commentary.

20 Qa3 Rxd1+ 21 Rxd1 Qg4 22 Ne1 Qxd1 23 gxh3 Qxe1+ 24 Kg2 Nd4 25 cxd4 exd4, and within a few moves White resigned.

A very similar theme to decoy is that of shutting out one or several pieces. The essence of this procedure, which occurs much more rarely, is as follows: on the part of the board where the counterattack takes place, a temporary superiority in force is achieved. A classic example of such a counterattack is provided by the well known game **Aronson - Tal,** 24th USSR Championship, Moscow, 1957.



By sacrificing a pawn at c7, Black has slightly drawn the white queen away from the defence of its own king. But this is merely the overture to the basic idea of the counterattack, which begins with an elegant and unusually effective move.

26 . . . Bb1!!

By shutting out the rook at a1 from the defence of the 1st rank, Black ensures the invasion of his heavy pieces into the opponent's position.

27 Be5 Ne6
28 Qd6 Qf5
29 Bf4

White is even ready to give up material — 29 . . . g5 wins a piece, but Tal prefers to continue his counterattack.

29 . . . Ng5
30 Qb4 Be4

At last the rook can hasten to the help of its king, but it is too late: White is deprived of his pair of strong bishops, and all the black pieces have now taken up attacking positions.

31 Bxe4 Rxe4
32 Rf1 Re2
33 Qd6

With the last hope of catching Black in a trap: 33 . . . Nh3+?? 34 Rxh3 Qxh3 35 Qd3+ and 36 Qxe2.

33 . . . Rxa2

Of course, not for the sake of winning a pawn, but to allow the queen onto the 2nd rank in front of the rook.

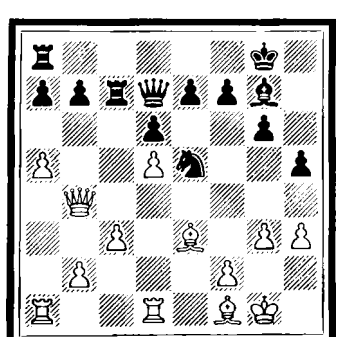
34 Qd5 Qc2
35 c5 Rd8!!

A very pretty move, but more importantly, an instructive one. The counterattacking side does not have the right, even for a second, to forget about the attacking potential retained by the opponent. Thus here, instead of the move in the game it only needed Black to play the 'natural' 35 . . . Re8 with the threats of . . . Re2 and . . . Re1, when White would have had the winning 36 Rxh6+!!

36 Bd6 Re8

Now, when the bishop has ceased 'looking' at the black king, this invasion by Black's third heavy piece decides the game in his favour. White was 'saved' from capitulation only by the fall of his flag.

The fact that this device can bring good dividends in the most diverse situations is demonstrated by another example from one of Tal's games.



In the game **Kudrin - Tal,** Titograd, 1984, he found the

following way of parrying the highly unpleasant threat of 20 f4.

19 . . . Qf5!

The d7 square is vacated for the knight, and yet Black's move looks like an oversight: after all, the rook at c7 is left undefended . . . White immediately exploits this.

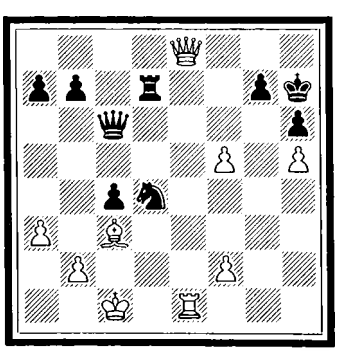
20	**Bxa7!?**	**Rxa7!**
21	**Qb6**	**Nf3+**
22	**Kh1**	**Rc4**
23	**Qxa7**	**Rh4!!**

The white queen, decoyed to the 'edge of the world', has no way of taking part in the main battle, and the first impression is that the white king will be mated!

24	**gxh4**	**Qf4**
25	**Kg2**	**Nxh4+**
26	**Kg1**	**Nf3+**
27	**Kg2**	**Nh4+**

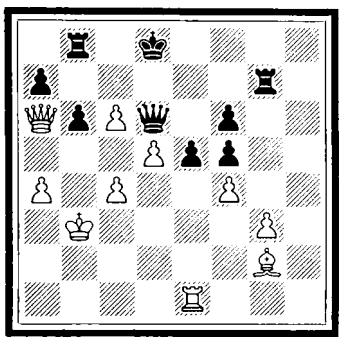
Alas, there is only perpetual check. But the problem of defending an inferior position has been solved!

What would you have played?



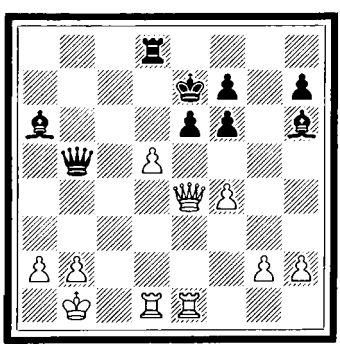
No. 56

Things look highly unattractive for Black: 34 Qg6+ with mate in two moves is threatened, and the knight move to b3 looks merely like a 'spite' check. Nevertheless . . .



No. 57

White's offensive in the centre and on the kingside has come to a halt, and the initiative has passed to Black, who in addition has a material advantage. With White to move, what can he hope for?



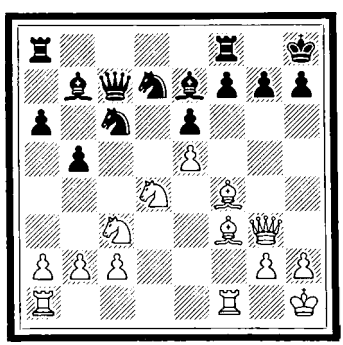
No. 58

A complicated skirmish in a very sharp opening variation has led to this double-edged position. White is continuing his offensive against the black king caught in the centre. What are the defensive resources available to Black, whose turn it is to move?

18
180 degree turn

Often the defending side succeeds with a tactical pawn counterblow on the very part of the board where the attack is being conducted. This is explained by the fact that, as a rule, the pursuer does not even imagine that he may be transformed into the pursued: after all, the 'pursuit' appears to be being conducted according to all the rules. Meanwhile, if only on the basis of the following examples, one can — and probably should — cast doubts on the old rule, which states that the attacker has more right to a mistake than the defender. This is correct only in conditions of a positional advantage, when there is a methodical siege, not involving rapidly-developing, concrete variations. But a swift, combinational attack (such as can occur in the overwhelming majority of modern openings like the Sicilian Defence) demands equal accuracy of both players. Otherwise a counterblow in the attacked sector may be comparable in strength with the detonation of a bomb. It can be landed either by the g-pawn, or the h-pawn.

Gufeld–Polugayevsky
28th USSR Championship
Moscow, 1961



In this typically Sicilian position, White began an attack with a temporary sacrifice.

16 Nd5! exd5
17 Nf5?

White should not have tried for too much, but should have been satisfied with an advantage after 17 e6 Nde5 (or *17 . . . Qd8 18 Nf5 Bf6 19 Bc7*)

18 Nxc6 Qxc6 19 Bxe5 f6 20 Bd4, when the e6 pawn is immune because of 20 . . . Qxe6? 21 Qc7! and 22 Rae1. But White decided first to achieve also the exchange of the opponent's important dark-square bishop, reckoning on 17 . . . g6 18 Nxe7 Nxe7 19 e6. But instead of the obviously defensive 17 . . . g6 Black found a counterblow, after which White could have immediately resigned.

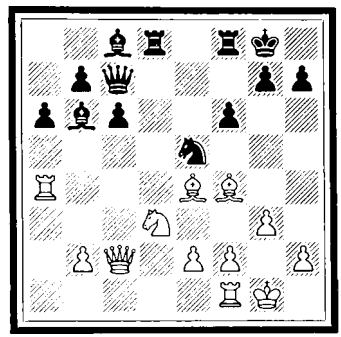
17 . . . g5!!

This resembles the classic attack from ambush at the attacker's flank, so brilliantly executed by many great commanders. It only needs the white bishop to be diverted from its control of e5 — 18 Bxg5 Bxg5 19 Qxg5, when the inclusion in the defence of the black queen — 19 . . . Qxe5 — does not leave even a trace of an attack.

White chooses another way to capitulate.

18 e6 Qxf4 19 Qxf4 gxf4 20 exd7 Rad8 21 Bxd5 Rxd7 White resigns.

Ex-World Champion Max Euwe made excellent use of latent counterattacking factors in the game **Vidmar - Euwe,** Nottingham, 1936.



The white queen/knight battery which is threatening to fire after Bxh7+, the pin on the knight at e5, plus the opponent's weakness on the a2-g8 diagonal — all this suggests that White has more than sufficient compensation for the pawn and that his activity is very dangerous.

But the assessment of the position was changed by the brilliant **21 . . . g5!!**

Had Black been guided only by so-called 'general conditions', he would never have ventured on such an obvious weakening of his kingside. In passing we should remark that while, for example, a counterblow in the centre in reply to an attack on the flank has long become the ABC of counterattacking, as yet the counterblow in the attacked sector has not come into general use.

But let us return to the

Vidmar - Euwe game.

22 Bxh7+ Qxh7
23 Bxe5

Evidently reckoning on 23 . . . fxe5 24 Qb3+ and 25 Qxb6, when White regains his pawn, and Black is left with terrible weaknesses at e5 and g5. But the point is that beforehand Black had associated his flank blow with the following far-sighted move.

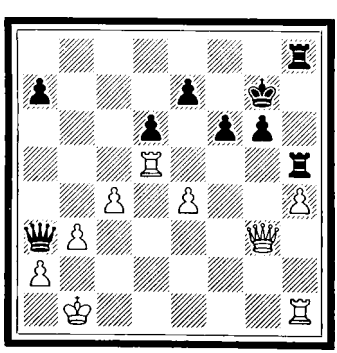
23 . . . Ba7!
24 Bc3 b5

It becomes clear that Black has redeployed his forces to great effect.

25 Raa1 c5
26 Qc1 c4
27 Ne1 Bb7

Not a trace of White's activity remains — the initiative has completely passed to Black.

28 Nf3 g4 29 Ng5 Qf5 White resigns.



In the game **Rucheva - Matveyeva,** Yerevan, 1985, it is evident that the two players have been attacking on opposite flanks: Black on the queenside and White on the kingside. The position is roughly equal, but . . .

29 . . . Kf7!
30 Rg1?

Had the point of the opponent's last move been guessed, White would have simplified the game by 30 Rxh5. But now, by a counterblow in the attacked sector, Black breaks through, intensifying the threats.

30 . . . g5!
31 Qf3

31 hxg5 would have failed to 31 . . . Rh2 32 Rg2 Rh1+ 33 Rg1 R8h2.

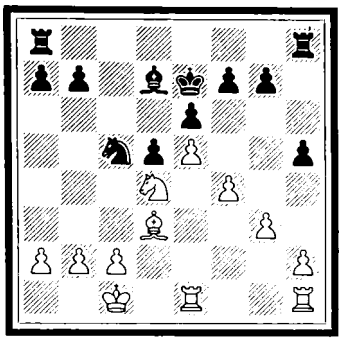
31 . . . Ke8

The hasty 31 . . . Rxh4? would have thrown away the win: 32 Rdxg5.

32 Rb5 Rxh4
33 Qf5 Rh2
34 Rb8+ Kf7
35 Qd5+ e6

White was 'saved' from capitulation by the fall of her flag.

Timman-Chernin
Montpellier, 1985



White's advantage is determined primarily by his control of d4 and the possibility of a kingside offensive (f4-f5). By . . . g6 Black can merely hamper, but not prevent it: the opponent has available the preparatory h2-h3, g3-g4 and then f4-f5. Therefore the original plan of counterplay prepared by Black is of particular merit.

18 . . . Rag8!

Now White must either reconcile himself to the complete blockade of the kingside after 19 h4 g6, or allow the counterblow . . . g5 and agree to a double-edged battle.

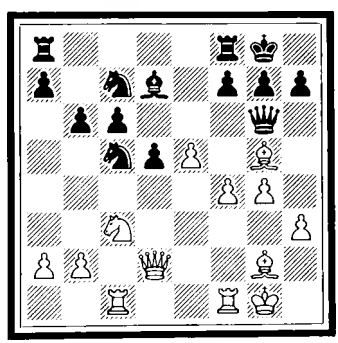
19 Rhf1!? g5
20 f5 g4
21 f6+ Kd8
22 Re3 h4
23 b4

Black was already threatening 23 . . . Rh5 and 24 . . . Ne4, eliminating the e5 pawn.

23 . . . hxg3
24 hxg3 Nxd3
25 cxd3 Rh2

White still has the advantage — a good knight against a bad bishop, but the activity of Black's rooks and the space gained on the kingside enable him to maintain the balance. Later he even gained a material superiority, then lost it, but all this no longer bears any relation to our theme.

Now — an advance by the f-pawn, which occurs more rarely in practice, but also has all the typical features of a counterblow.



After employing in the opening a well known pawn sacrifice, in the 2nd game of the 1984/5 **Kasparov-Karpov** World Championship Match, White has staked his hopes on a kingside attack. He requires only one more tempo, but . . .

21 . . . f6!

By this timely counterblow Black breaks up the opponent's pawn chain and prepares a counteroffensive precisely in the attacked sector.

22 exf6 gxf6
23 Bh4 f5

The g4 pawn is attacked, and after 24 g5 Ne4 the outcome is clear. It is now White who must think in terms of saving the game, and he embarks on a sharp complication of the struggle.

24 b4! fxg4
25 hxg4

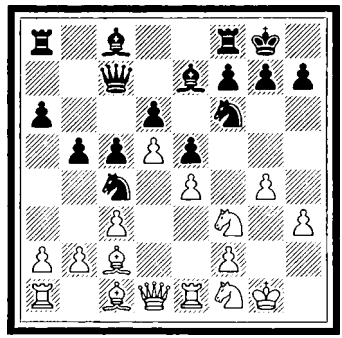
If 25 bxc5, then 25 . . . gxh3 26 Rf2 hxg2 27 Rxg2 Bg4 and 28 . . . h5.

25 . . . Nd3
26 Rf3! Nxc1
27 f5 Qg7
28 Qxc1 Rae8
29 Qd2

At the cost of the exchange White has created a double-edged position in which, after narrowly avoiding defeat, he managed to draw.

The counterblow with the h-pawn also occurs, and in the Ruy Lopez it has recently become quite common.

Tal-Petrosian
43rd USSR Championship
Premier League
Yerevan, 1975



In this typical position from the Ruy Lopez with a blocked centre, the approved pattern is for White to attack on the kingside and Black on the queenside. But instead Black begins counterplay on the side where he is being attacked.

15 . . . h5
16 gxh5

White is forced to accept the challenge, since the stabilization of the position on the kingside after 16 g5 Nh7 followed by . . . g6 and possibly . . . f6 is clearly in Black's favour.

16 . . . Bxh3

But not 16 . . . Nxh5? 17 b3 Nb6 18 Nxe5, winning a pawn.

17 N3h2 g6!

The counterplay in the attacked sector demands the mutual opening of lines, otherwise it would come to a halt without managing to get

properly started.

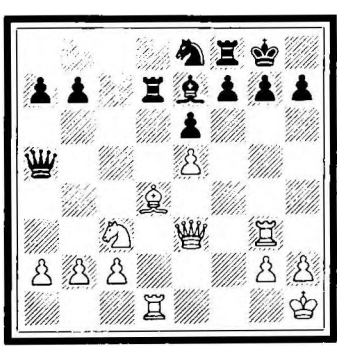
18 Ng3 Kg7

This is the whole point. The black king allows the rook onto the h-file, and itself moves out of the danger zone.

19 Kh1 Rh8 20 Rg1 Kf8 21 a4 Nb6, and White has failed to extract anything significant from the opening.

And now a further example of a counterattack in the attacked sector.

Geller-Korchnoi
Candidates Match, 1971



Black's position is difficult, and White's attack is threatening to develop of its own accord. White has no vulnerable points against which counterplay could be created, but Black creates preconditions for it by a paradoxical move.

20 . . . h5!

This looks like a pointless weakening of the castled position, but in fact Black, firstly, deprives his opponent of the important g4 square (White was threatening, in particular, *Rf1-f4-g4* with decisive pressure on g7), and secondly, he gradually secures a post at f5 for his 'expelled' knight, after which it will become a formidable counter-attacking force.

21 Rf1 Qb4 22 Ne2 Qc4 23 c3 g6 24 Rgf3 Ng7 25 b3 Qa6 26 Ng3 h4 27 Ne4 Nf5 28 Qf4 Qxa2

White has mobilized all his resources, but Black, relying on his impregnable knight, decides both to take the pawn and to prepare for counter-attack. This is clearly seen in the variation 29 g4 hxg3 30 hxg3 Kg7 31 g4 Rh8+ 32 Kg1 Rh4!, leading to a double-edged position.

The other attempt, which occurs in the game, also demonstrates that Black has good counterplay.

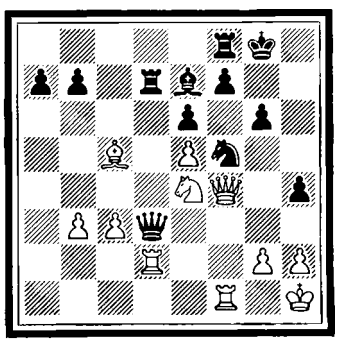
29 Bc5 Qe2
30 R3f2

30 Nf6+ Bxf6 31 Bxf8 Bxe5 would have led to a material advantage for Black.

30 . . . Qd3
31 Rf3 Qe2

32 R3f2 Qd3
33 Rd2

Unable to reattune psychologically, the attacker rejects the repetition of moves and . . . comes under a skilfully prepared counterattack.



33 . . . Qxd2!
34 Nxd2 Bxc5
35 Ne4 Be3
36 Nf6+

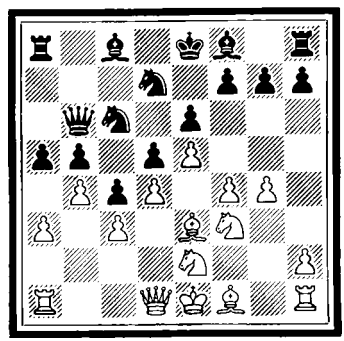
36 Qf3 was better, keeping the threat of a check at f6 in reserve.

36 . . . Kg7
37 Qc4 Rdd8
38 Ng4 Bb6
39 Nf2?

A mistake in an already poor position.

39 . . . Bxf2 40 Rxf2 Ne3, and in view of the unavertable threat of 41 . . . Rd1+, White resigned.

Poselnikov-Yakimenko
Correspondence, 1978



Only 12 moves have been made, but the position is already complicated and difficult to assess. By b2-b4 White has halted the opponent's offensive on the queenside, and, at any rate for the present, the opening of the a-file does not promise anything. In turn, with the aggressive g2-g4 White intends after some preparation to play f4-f5, which will give him very strong pressure.

Black's counteraction is timely and energetic.

12 . . . h5!
13 gxh5 Rxh5
14 Bg2 Qa7!

After delaying somewhat the development of White's initiative on the kingside, Black creates the threat of 15 . . . axb4 and gains time

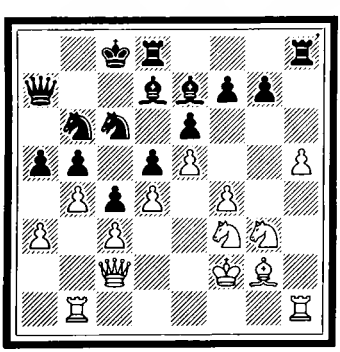
for the completion of his mobilization.

15 Rb1 Be7
16 h4

With the idea of cramping the opponent by the further advance of the h-pawn and of securing a post for his bishop at h3. But in this connection White's 14th move proves to be a loss of tempo. 16 Kf2 came into consideration, with the idea of Ng3 and f4-f5.

16 ... Nb6
17 Kf2 Bd7
18 Qc2 O—O—O
19 Ng3 Rhh8
20 h5

Consistent, but too slow. The immediate 20 f5 was possible, or else 20 Bh3, since in the event of 20 ... Bxh4?! White retains the advantage after 21 Nxh4 Rxh4 22 Bxe6 Rxh1 23 Bxd7+.



20 ... f6!

Another counterblow in the attacked sector. Black rightly assumes that his chance lies in a counterattack.

21 Bh3 Rdf8
22 Ke2 Na4
23 f5

Now Black is prepared for this advance and he completely opens up the game.

23 ... fxe5
24 fxe6

A very typical situation: White does not yet sense that he is now not the only one attacking. He should have preferred 24 dxe5, for the moment keeping the f-file closed.

24 ... Be8
25 dxe5 Rxf3!!

The idea of a counterattack in the attacked sector is strikingly embodied in this fine rook sacrifice. The initiative passes to Black.

26 Kxf3

Totally bad is 26 Bxa7 Rxc3 27 Qd2 Rxg3, when White is unable to parry the numerous threats: 28 ... Nc3+, 28 ... Nxa7, 28 ... Bxh5+ etc.

26 ... d4!

After 26 ... Nxe5+? 27 Ke2 Qc7 28 Rbg1 Black has no compensation.

27 cxd4 Nxd4+
28 Bxd4 Bc6+

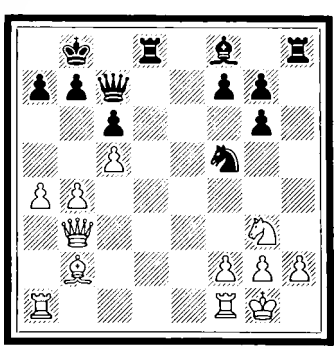
29 Ne4?

White could have continued the struggle only by giving up his queen — 29 Qe4 Bxe4+ 30 Kxe4 Qb7+ 31 Kf4, after which a very sharp and intricate position would have arisen. After missing this possibility, he ends up in a 'mortal' pin.

29 . . . Qxd4 30 Bf5 Nc3 31 Rbe1 Qxe5 32 Kg4 Nxe4 33 Rxe4 Qf6 34 Bg6 Qg5+

And in view of the variation 35 Kf3 Rf8+ 36 Bf7 Qf5+ 37 Ke3 Bg5+ 38 Kd4 Rd8+, White resigned.

An original assessment of the position was made by Black in the game **Dückstein -Petrosian,** Varna Olympiad, 1962.



To feel completely happy, Black has to develop his bishop, in order to connect his rooks and achieve complete coordination of his pieces. But for the moment the bishop has no suitable square, and the future World Champion secures one by a counterblow.

18 . . . a5!

Black rightly assumes that the opening of the b-file against his own king is for the moment not dangerous, whereas c5 will be an ideal post for his bishop.

19 Rad1 Rxd1
20 Rxd1 Rh4!

Forcing White to concede the c5 square.

21 bxa5 Bxc5
22 a6 b6!

On 23 a5 there follows 23 . . . b5, when the black king feels comfortable enough behind both his own, and the enemy pawns.

23 Re1 Ka7
24 Be5 Qd7
25 Ne4 Bd4

The black pieces become moe and more active.

26 g3 Bxe5!

And this exchange sacrifice consolidates Black's initiative. Now White is obliged in particular to keep an eye on the flank where not long before he was attacking.

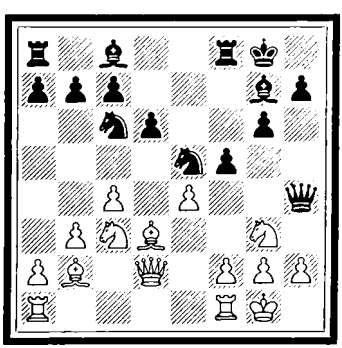
27 gxh4 Nd4
28 Qd1 Qd5!

The massive centralization of all Black's pieces and the formidable passed c-pawn allow his position to be assessed as won. Especially since White has no counterplay.

The game concluded:

29 Re3 Nf5 30 Re1 Nd4 (gaining time on the clock for thought) **31 Qd3 f5 32 Ng5 c5 33 Re3 c4 34 Qd1 Kxa6 35 Ra3 Bf6 36 h3 f4 37 Qg4 Ka5! 38 Nf3 Kb4 39 Nxd4 Kxa3 40 Nc2+ Kxa4** White resigns.

It happens much more rarely that a pawn counterblow in the attacked sector is the start of an entire counterattacking plan, and plays a key part in the defender's strategic concept.



In the game **Polugayevsky - Nezhmetdinov,** Sochi, 1958, an unsuccessful opening experiment led to White having to go onto the defensive at a very early stage. Black's control of the strongpoint at e5 and the aggressive position of his queen promise him an attack on the kingside. Since any possible activity on the queenside will be clearly too late, and 13 f4 is here unsatisfactory because of 13 . . . Ng4, when 14 h3 simply allows mate — 14 . . . Bd4+ 15 Kh1 Qxg3 16 hxg4 Qh4 mate, White conceived a plan of defence and counterattack precisely at the place where the opponent is concentrating his forces. After all, behind the attacking ranks there is also the black king . . .

13 f3! Bh6

Black is obliged to weaken the long dark-square diagonal, since without a secure defence of the future pawn outpost at f4 he will be unable to advance his g6 pawn to g4.

14 Qd1 f4
15 Nge2 g5
16 Nd5 g4
17 g3!

A basic link in White's plan. This 'bayonet' counterblow enables the opponent's offensive to be halted and creates all the preconditions for a counterattack: the black pieces lose their potential power.

17 . . . fxg3

All the same Black cannot maintain his hold on f4, and 17 . . . Qh3 18 Nexf4 Bxf4 19 Nxf4 Rxf4 20 gxf4 Nxf3+ 21 Rxf3 gxf3 22 Qd2 obliges him to force a draw by 22 . . . f2+ 23 Kxf2 Qxh2+ 24 Ke1 Qh1+ 25 Ke2 Qh5+.

18 hxg3 Qh3
19 f4

It only requires Black to make two further attacking moves — 19 . . . Nf3+ 20 Kf2 Qh2+, when White's idea will be carried out in all its glory. After 21 Ke3 he white king is securely screened behind its barricade of pawns, whereas Black's comes under a virtually irresistible attack along the h-file and the a1-h8 diagonal: 22 Rh1 and 22 Nf6+ are threatened.

19 . . . Be6!

Only in this, almost paradoxical, way can Black indirectly secure the key position of his knight at e5 (if *20 fxe5*, then *20 . . . Bxd5* and *21 . . . Be3+*) and maintain a double-edged situation. In addition he gives White an opportunity to . . . go wrong, of which he makes use.

20 Bc2?

It stands to reason that the immediate 20 Kf2 was not possible in view of 20 . . . Bxd5 21 cxd5 Nxd3+ 22 Qxd3 Bxf4, but the correct 20 Bb1 would have led to great complications. White would have had his chances, and this means that the entire counterplay in the attacked sector would have been justified. But now Black gains the chance to carry out a combination of exceptional beauty.

20 . . . Rf7 21 Kf2 Qh2+ 22 Ke3 Bxd5 23 cxd5 Nb4 24 Rh1 Rxf4!! 25 Rxh2

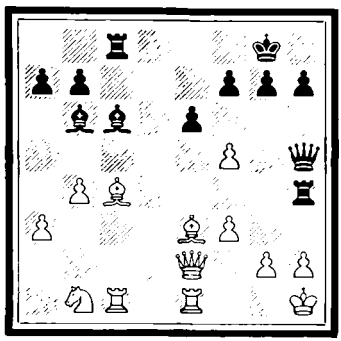
Had the white bishop been not at c2, but at b1, Black's combination would have been impossible because of the simple 25 gxf4. But now this would have been met by 25 . . . Bxf4+ 26 Nxf4 (or *26 Kd4 Qf2+ 27 Kc3 Qc5* mate) 26 . . . Nxc2+.

The conclusion of the game bears no relation to our theme, and we therefore give it without any commentary.

25 . . . Rf3++ 26 Kd4 Bg7!! 27 a4 c5+ 28 dxc6 bxc6 29 Bd3 Nexd3+ 30 Kc4 d5+! 31 exd5 cxd5+ 32 Kb5 Rb8+ 33 Ka5 Nc6+ White resigns.

And to conclude this section, here is an illustration of how important it is to know all the various defensive devices, and of what happens if a

player does not have a mastery of them.

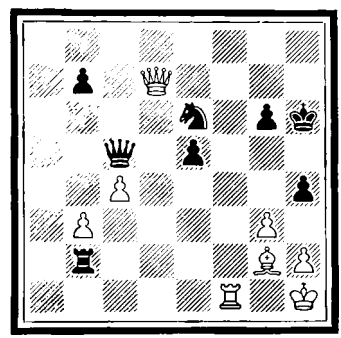


This position arose more than three quarters of a century ago in the game **Alapin - Chigorin,** Monte Carlo, 1901. Black has sacrificed a piece and created serious threats against the enemy king. The game continued:

24 Bxb6 Rxh2+ 25 Kg1 axb6 26 fxe6 Rh1+ 27 Kf2 Qh4+ 28 Ke3 Rd8! 29 Red1 Qg5+ 30 Kf2 Qh4+, with a draw by perpetual check.

But if this game had been played in our day, Semyon Alapin, a well known theorist of his time (incidentally, in the Monte Carlo Tournament he took 5th prize) would have found without fail a counter-blow in the attacked sector: 24 g4! Qxg4 (it is easy to check that Black gains nothing by a new sacrifice — *24 . . . Rxh2+ 25 Qxh2 Bxf3+ 26 Kg1 Qxg4+ 27 Kf2)* 25 Bd5!!, and White wins.

It remains to add that the move 24 g4! in the diagram position was suggested by ex-World Champion Vasily Smyslov.

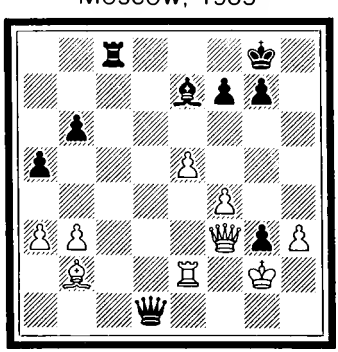


In the game **Donchenko - Bitman,** Dushanbe, 1974, the situation of the black king gives very serious cause for alarm: an attack from the rear will be irresistible. And that is what happened after **41 . . . Nd4?** (this move was sealed by Black after 25 minutes' thought) **42 Qd8 hxg3** (or 42 . . . Nf5 43 Qh8+ Kg5 44 gxh4+ Nxh4 — after *44 . . . Kg4* Black is mated in two moves — 45 Qd8+ Kh5 46 Qd1+ Kh6 47 Qc1+, picking up the rook) **43 h4 Kg7 44 Qf6+ Kh7 45 h5 Rxg2 46 hxg6+ Kh6 47 Qh4+,** and Black resigned.

But had Black correctly assessed the position as indefensible, then by the method of elimination he would have come to the idea of active defence — counter-attack. Especially since he has a way of slightly opening up the enemy king and of gaining time to activate his forces:

41 . . . h3! 42 Bxh3 (the attempt to retain control of the long light-square diagonal by *42 Bxb7?* allows mate — *42 . . . Qf2!*) 42 . . . Qe3 43 Qxb7 *(43 Bg2* can be met by *43 . . . Rxg2! 44 Kxg2 Qe2+* with perpetual check) 43 . . . e4 (again severing the link between the white queen and bishop along the a8-h1 diagonal) 44 Bg2 Rxg2 45 Kxg2 Qe2+ 46 Rf2 Nf4+ 47 gxf4 Qg4+, with a draw by perpetual check.

Gavrikov-Chernin
Moscow, 1985

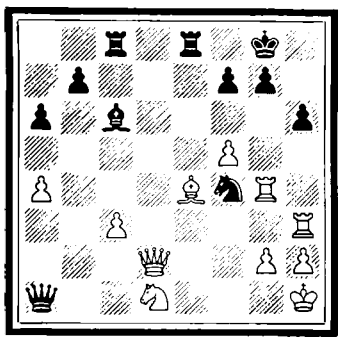


Black is attacking, and his main target is the white king. But in the black monarch's residence the absence of a pawn at h7 or h6 is also felt. This could and should have suggested to White a way of saving the game — by a counterattack in the attacked sector. It could have been carried out by 33 e6! Rc2 *(33 . . . f6 34 Qh5* leads to perpetual check, and *33 . . . fxe6? 34 Qg4* to an advantage for White) 34 Qa8+ Bf8 35 exf7+ Kxf7 36 Qe8+ Kg8 37 Qe6+ Kh8 38 Bxg7+! (White already has a perpetual check by *38 Qh6+ Kg8 39 Qe6+*, but in passing it does no harm to try one more chance) 38 . . . Kxg7! (after *38 . . . Bxg7? 39 Qe8+ Kh7 40 Qe4+* White wins) 39 Qe5+ with perpetual check.

After missing this possibility, White went on to lose: **33 Kxg3? Rd8 34 Kg2 Rd3 35 Qa8+** (35 Qf1 Rg3+) **35 . . . Bf8 36 Rf2 Qxb3 37 Qc8 Qd5+ 38 Kh2 Rd2,** winning a piece.

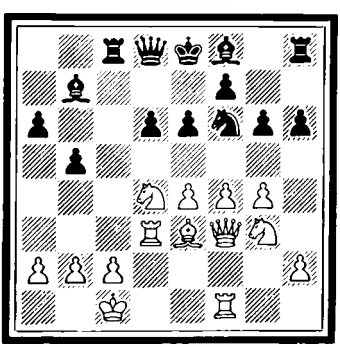
What would you have played?

No. 59



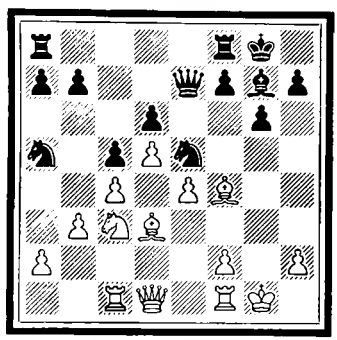
By **25 f6** White continued his attack. Assess and analyze the position. Find a means of counterplay for Black.

No. 60



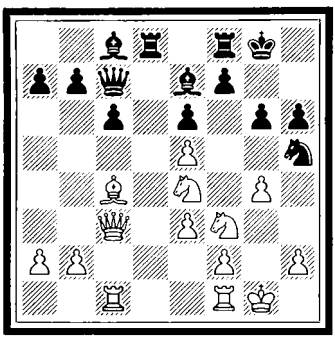
At first sight it appears that White has an undisputed advantage. He has completed his development, and is attacking in the centre and on the kingside. No secure shelter is apparent for the black king. Is this assessment correct? Or can Black, to move, Shake it?

No. 61



This type of position often occurs in the Yugoslav Variation of the King's Indian Defence and in certain other lines. The basic defect for Black is his knight at a5, which lacks prospects and sometimes finds itself in danger. It is natural that White will normally exploit his advantage in force to mount an offensive on the kingside and in the centre, and in particular to make the e4-e5 breakthrough. What should Black do? Should he prepare counterplay on the queenside, or does he have other possibilities?

No. 62



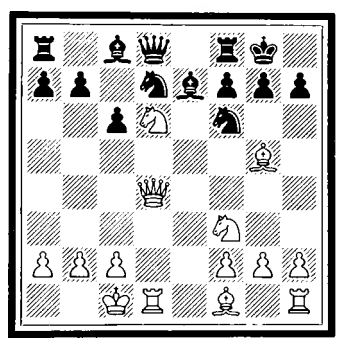
White's advantage compromises his much more active minor pieces, his cramping pawn outpost at e5, and his possibility of mounting an attack on the weakened position of the black king. In order to cramp his opponent still further, with his last move 17 g4 White decided to drive back the knight to g7. Was he right?

19
Attack is the best form of defence

This saying, which does not apply only to chess, is considered universal. Without here going into a discussion of it, we should like to make the following comment: if there is a choice between playing for equality and playing for a counterattack, the latter will normally bring greater dividends. Provided, of course, that the player launching the counterattack is not afraid of double-edged complications and is ready to take risks, balancing sometimes on the edge of the abyss. It is not possible to list all the motifs for such a decision: it may be to attack the opponent's king, to disrupt the co-ordination of the enemy pieces which are ready to attack, or simply to take the game along different lines, in which the opponent is unexpectedly forced into sharp play with chances for both sides.

Illustrations are provided by examples of how, in reply to pressure in the centre, the defending side initiates active counterplay on the one of the flanks.

Tal-Smyslov
Candidates Tournament
Yugoslavia, 1959



It is clear that White is better developed and is dominating the centre. But Black has no weaknesses, and from the viewpoint of playing for equality, many commentators suggested 10 . . . Nb6 (but not *10 . . . Nd5 11 h4! f6 12 Bf4,* when the weakness at e6 may gradually become very real, and for the knight at d7 and bishop at e7 it is not easy to find good posts), reckoning that in this case White's lead in development, being a

temporary factor, would evaporate to nothing, since exchanges and simplification are inevitable.

But firstly, even here 11 Nxc8 followed by Qh4 retains for White chances of an attack, and secondly, this would have signified a deliberate decision to play only for a draw. By contrast, the counter-attacking method chosen by Black, piece counterplay against undefended points in the opponent's position, does not deprive him of winning chances, although it provokes a storm of complications. And it stands to reason that in this case the danger of making a mistake also increases.

10 ... Qa5!

Threatening 11 ... Qxa2, and if 11 Kb1, then 11 ... Bxd6 12 Qxd6 Ne4 etc.

11 Bc4 b5!

A perfectly consistent development of the counter-attack. 11 ... Qc5 would have led to simplification, but then the quiet 12 Nxc8 Raxc8 13 Rhe1 would have retained for White pressure in the centre and a slight positional advantage.

It must also be added that here 11 ... Bxd6 12 Qxd6 Ne4 no longer works because of 13 Qe7, when White has an attack both after 13 ... Nxg5 14 Nxg5 Ne5 15 Bb3, and after 13 ... Nxf2 14 Rxd7 Bxd7 15 Rf1.

12 Bd2!

Vacating g5 for the knight with gain of tempo. 12 Bb3 is not good in view of 12 ... c5, while on 12 Nf5 Black has 12 ... Bc5.

12 ... Qa6
13 Nf5 Bd8
14 Qh4

On the one hand this piece sacrifice for an attack is justified, on the other hand it is forced! Black would have seized the initiative after both 14 Bb3 c5 and 14 Be2 Qxa2 15 Bc3 c5.

14 ... bxc4
15 Qg5 Nh5

For the moment the principle of activity is maintained. The attempt to go onto the defensive for the sake of keeping the material advantage — 15 ... g6, would evidently have been refuted by Tal's intended 16 Bc3 Qxa2 17 Nh6+ Kg7 (if *17 ... Kh8 18 Rxd7!*) 18 Rhe1, or even 18 Nh4! Qa1+ *(18 ... Re8 19 Rhe1! Re6 20 Ng4 Qa1+ 21 Kd2 Qa6 22 Qh6+ Kg8 23 Rxe6 fxe6 24 Nxg6! Ne4+ 25 Ke2 Nxc3+ 26 bxc3*

hxg6 27 Qxg6+ Kf8 28 Nh6, mating) 19 Kd2 Qa6 20 N4f5+ Kh8 21 Ke2! Re8+ 22 Kf1 with very strong threats.

16 Nh6+ Kh8
17 Qxh5 Qxa2?

A hasty move, which ruins all Black's preceding play. 17 . . . Bf6! would have strengthened the counterattack. Tal was intending to continue 18 Bc3, and if 18 . . . Bxc3 19 Ng5!? g6 20 Nhxf7+ Rxf7 21 Nxf7+ Kg7 22 Qf3 Bf6 23 Nd6, but if this variation is continued, after 23 . . . Qxa2 24 Ne8+ Kf7 25 Rxd7+ Kxe8! White has to be satisfied with a draw.

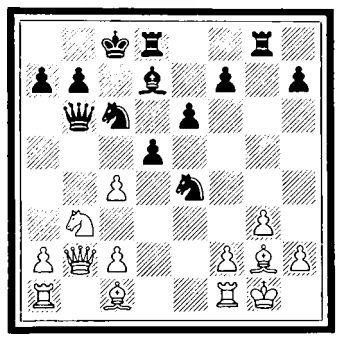
Thus the counterattack began with 10 . . . Qa5 and 11 . . . b5 could have fully justified itself (although White could still have retained a slight advantage by *18 Nxf7+ Kg8 19 N7g5 h6* — 19 . . . Bxg5+ is very strongly met by 20 Qxg5! — *20 Ne4 Qxa2 21 Nxf6+ Nxf6 22 Qa5*). But after the mistake in the game White wins with a brilliant combination.

18 Bc3 Nf6

Now 18 . . . Bf6 is too late — 19 Nxf7+ Kg8 20 N3g5 h6 21 Nxh6+ or 20 . . . Bxg5+ 21 Nxg5 h6 22 Qg6.

19 Qxf7! Qa1+ 20 Kd2 Rxf7 21 Nxf7+ Kg8 22 Rxa1 Kxf7 23 Ne5+, and three moves later Black resigned.

A. Ivanov-Gufeld
Druskinikai, 1983



White is not so much attacking on the queenside, as intending after 15 cxd5 exd5 16 c4 to deprive the centralized black knight at e4 of support and to seize all the dark squares in the centre.

Hence Black's decision to hinder the natural development of events by a flank diversion.

14 . . . Nxg3!
15 hxg3 Rxg3
16 Be3 Rxg2+!
17 Kxg2 d4!
18 Bf4

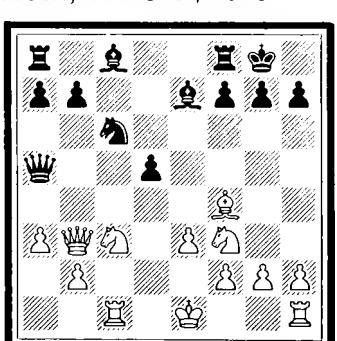
18 Bxd4 Nxd4 19 Qxd4 fails to 19 . . . Bc6+.

18 . . . e5
19 Bg3 Ne7!
20 Qa3

Here Black deviated from the correct path — **20 ... Qc6+? 21 f3 Nf5,** and after the possible 22 Qxa7! he should have lost, whereas the correct 20 ... Qh6 21 Rh1 Bc6+ 22 f3 Qe3 would have given him very strong counterplay, despite being a rook down *(23 Raf1 e4! 24 f4 Qe2+)*, which would evidently have been sufficient to maintain dynamic equilibrium.

However, in a severe time scramble both sides made several mistakes and 'justice triumphed': the game ended in a draw ...

But, of course, it is not just the counterattacking side who may go wrong. Psychologically there are much more grounds for the recent 'hunter' to do this. An illustration of this is provided by the well known game **Taimanov - Larsen,** Vinkovci, 1970.



Objectively Black's position is worse. The isolated d5 pawn is attacked, and it can be defended only by 14 ... Rd8, on which there may follow 15 Qb5, and after the exchange of queens White obtains the better game. Therefore, rejecting passive defence with hopes only of equality, Larsen begins a bold counterattack bordering on recklessness, such as is not often seen.

14 ... g5!?

Without great risk of being wrong, we can name the factors by which Larsen was guided. Firstly, he rightly assumed that such a turn of events would be extremely unexpected for White. Secondly, from the calm waters of positional pressure in the centre, White immediately has to plunge into a maelstrom of complications, where the probability of a mistake increases many times. There were also, of course, some purely chess reasons for such a decision. Larsen took account of the fact that the white king had not yet castled, and that in return for the weakening of his kingside Black would obtain either good piece play, or material gain.

15 Bg3

It is clear that after 15 Bxg5 Bxg5 16 Nxg5 d4 White loses a piece. Also dangerous is 15 Be5 g4 16 Qxd5 Bd8 17 Qxa5 Bxa5 18 Bf6 gxf3 19 gxf3 Bxc3+ 20 Rxc3 Re8 21 Rg1+ Kf8 22 Rc5 Re6 23 Bg7+ Ke7 24 Rh5 Bd7, and if 25 Rxh7 Ne5!

15 ... g4
16 Nd4

A natural reply, but not the best. On 16 Ne5 Larsen was planning 16 ... Bf6 17 Nxc6 bxc6 18 O—O Be6 with unclear play. And only later, after analysis, it was found that the weakening of the black king's position would have told after 16 Nd2, and if 16 ... d4 17 Nc4 Qf5 18 Ne2 dxe3 19 O—O.

16 ... Nxd4
17 exd4 Bg5

This is the point of Black's counterplay. If White moves his rook, then his king will be caught in the centre, e.g. 18 Rc2 Re8+ 19 Re2 Rxe2+ 20 Kxe2, and Black has a pleasant choice between 20 ... Bd7, 20 ... Bf5 and 20 ... b6.

18 O—O Bxc1
19 Rxc1 Be6
20 h3

It was this position that White had in mind when he sacrificed the exchange. He assumed that after the opening of the g-file the black king would be left undefended. But when Black began his flank counterattack on move 14, he had anticipated this, and so White should no longer have hoped for too much, but should have tried to gain a draw in the endgame after 20 Qxb7 Qb6 21 Qxb6.

20 ... gxh3
21 Be5 f6!

This allows White to carry out a combination, the refutation of which is already prepared!

22 Ne4 fxe5

But not, of course, 22 ... dxe4 because of mate in a few moves: 23 Qxe6+ Rf7 24 Rc7 Rf8 25 Qg4+ Kh8 26 Bxf6+ Rxf6 27 Qg7 mate.

23 Qg3+ Bg4!!

Had Black played 23 ... Kh8, he would have lost: 24 Qxe5+ and 25 Qxe6+, while if 23 ... Kf7, then 24 Ng5+ and 25 Qxe5. But now White's queen is lured onto a light square, the coordination of his pieces is disrupted, and his play on the dark squares becomes unrealizable.

24 Qxg4+ Kh8
25 Ng5 Qd2!
26 Rc7

Or 26 Rf1 hxg2 27 Kxg2 h6.

26 . . . Qxf2+ 27 Kh2 Qxg2+ 28 Qxg2 hxg2 29 dxe5 Rac8 30 Rxb7 Rc2 31 Nf7+ Kg7 32 e6 Kf6 33 e7 g1=Q+ 34 Kxg1 Rg8+ White resigns.

★ ★ ★

This concludes what we have to say about counter-attack. Does this mean that in other situations, not considered here, a counter-offensive is not possible? Of course not. It is impossible to give recipes for all eventualities in life: chess is inexhaustible, and there is an inexhaustible number of nuances which make every concrete position distinctive. And yet an acquaintance with the factors given here, which are more or less typical, may enable players to orientate themselves better in the endless diversity of situations which can arise on the board. It is no accident that we, the authors, whose style of play is largely based on counter-attack, can assert with complete certainty: knowledge helps us".

May it also help the reader.

Appendix

Answers to the Questions: "What would you have played?"

No. 1 (p.11).

In the game **Lisitsyn - Klaman,** Leningrad, 1949, it consisted of the following manoeuvre:

19 Nd2! Rb5
20 f4!

By securely blocking the diagonal along which the opponent's dark-square bishop was aiming *(g2-g3,* with the same idea, is less suitable, since it weakens a whole complex of light squares and creates a new target for Black to attack at g3), White averted an unfavourable development of events, and after then transferring his knight to e5, he won the game. An excellent example of timely prophylaxis!

No. 2 (p.11).

In the first instance on the overprotection of the d4 square, which for a long time restricts the opponent's counterplay. The strength of this plan was confirmed in several games from the **Petrosian - Spassky** World Championship Match, Moscow, 1969.

11 Be3!?

Here the bishop blocks the path of the e-pawn and may come under attack by the knight from f6, but the secure defence of the piece outpost at d4 fully compensates for this. After all, at an appropriate moment the white queen can become aggressive, now that it is relieved of the necessity to look after the knight at d4.

11 . . . Bg4
12 Qa4! Na5
13 Rad1 Nc4
14 Bc1

For the moment, control of the key point is reassigned to the rook, after which the black knight will be driven away . . . In the 12th game of the aforementioned match, after **14 . . . Qc8 15 Qc2 Rd8 16 b3 Ne5 17 Bb2 Qd7 18 f3! Bh5 19 Qf5! Nc6 20 Qxd7 Rxd7 21 Nxc6 bxc6** White gained a clear

advantage, the basis of which was his total control over that same d4 square.

No. 3 (p.24).

Nevertheless, in the 3rd game of the **Tal - Timman** Match, Montpellier, 1985, that is precisely what Black played!

12 ... Ndxe5!
13 f4 Nc4!!

After 13 ... Nxd4 14 Bxd4 Black simply stands badly, whereas now he begins mass simplification, maintaining the balance.

14 Nxc6 Nxe3! 15 Nxd8 Nxd1 16 Nxe6 Ne3 17 Nxc7+ Kd7 18 Nxa8 Nxc2 19 Nd2 Bc5+ 20 Kh1 Nxa1 21 Rxa1 Rxa8 22 Re1 Kd6 23 g3 Rc8 Draw agreed.

No. 4 (p.24).

Yes, in the game **Janowski-Capablanca,** New York, 1916, if on move 18 White had thought not about activity, but about maximum simplification of the position. He could have maintained the balance by continuing 18 Bxa5! Rxc1+ (after *18 ... Rxa5? 19 Rxc8 Bxc8 20 Nb3* the b5 pawn is lost) 19 Rxc1 Rxa5 20 Nb3 Ra8 21 Nc5!, when he has no reason to fear the two black bishops.

No. 5 (p.25).

And yet, in a game from the **Botvinnik - Smyslov** World Championship Match, Moscow, 1954, with his flag about to fall Black found an elegant defence.

39 ... c4!!
40 bxc4 Qa3

After forcing the exchange of queens, Black is in no danger of losing the endgame, even though two pawns down! The guarantee of this is provided by his active rook and — most importantly — the opposite-colour bishops.

41 Qxa3 Bxa3

White now tried sacrificing a piece, but here too the defence was accurate.

42 Bf5 gxf5 43 g6 Bf8 44 exf5 Bg7! 45 f6 Bxf6 46 g7 Bxg7 47 Rxg7 f3

By for the moment shutting in the white king, for the pawn Black obtains sufficient drawing chances.

48 Rg4 Rh3 49 Rg3 Rh4 50 Rxf3 Rxc4, and soon the players agreed a draw.

No. 6 (p.25).

For this reason in the game **Tal - Nunn,** USSR v Rest of

the World, London, 1984, at the cost of a pawn Black practically forced exchanges, when the remaining opposite-colour bishops guaranteed him a draw.

19 ... Ne3
20 Rae1 f4
21 Nd1

Sharp variations such as 21 Ne4 Rg6 22 Nh4 Bd4 do not give White anything real.

21 ... Bg4 22 Nxe3 fxe3 23 Rxe3 Qh5 24 Be4 Raf8 25 Qd3 Bxf3 26 Bxf3 Qg5 27 Kh1 Rf4 28 b3 Rh4 29 Re4

And here in view of the possible 29 ... Qf5 30 Rfe1 Be5 31 Rg4+ Rxg4 32 Qxf5 Rxf5 33 Bxg4 Rf2 the players agreed a draw.

No. 7 (p.33).

Defend, only defend! And first of all against the threatened forced march of the a3 pawn to the queening square. This can be done only by switching forces to the queenside, and in particular the slow moving knight.

31 ... R6g7!
32 a4 Ng6!
33 h3 Nf8
34 Bb5 Be6

Of course, the exchange of bishops would have weakened the light squares around the black king.

35 Bc4 Bc8
36 a5 Ne6
37 a6

White agrees to sacrifice the exchange, since the loss of a tempo by 37 Nc2 would have allowed the black knight to turn 'left' *(37 ... Ng5)* and create a threat against h3.

37 ... Nd4
38 Rxd4 exd4
39 Bd5 Be6!
40 a7 Ra8
41 Qc4 Rg5

Not leaving White time to capture on d4.

42 Qc6 Bxd5
43 exd5 Rgg8
44 Ne2 Rgd8
45 Nxd4?

Black's tenacious defence bears its first fruits: the preparatory 45 Nd3 was much stronger, and if 45 ... Qf5 46 Qc4 followed by Nxd4.

45 ... Bxb4
46 Qxc7+?

White could still have won by 46 Re2+ Kf8 47 Qf6 Kg8 48 Nc6, but that is the nature of chess: it is not only the defending side that makes mistakes. Now his main advantage has gone.

46 ... Kf8 47 Nc6 Qxd5! 48 Nxb4 Qb5+ 49 Nbd3 Rxd3 50 Nxd3 Qxd3+ 51 Kg1 Qb1+

52 Kh2 Qxa2 53 Qb8+ Rxb8 54 axb8=Q+ Kg7 55 Qxf4 Kg6

And after a further twenty moves the game **Golmayo - Alekhine,** Prague Olympiad, 1931, ended in a draw.

No. 8 (p.33).

He should defend against the stated threat, but without fail . . . passively. To this end 44 Rd1 was the most suitable, when it is not apparent where Black can break through.

But in the game **Timman - Sveshnikov,** Wijk aan Zee, 1981, White decided to disrupt his opponent's plan and at the same time keep his rook in an active position. This ended dismally.

44 Rg7? Rh6 45 Rg5 Rd6! 46 Rxe5 Rd3 47 Rxf4 Rxb3 48 Rf7 a4 49 Rxh7

Even so, 49 f4 would have given better saving chances.

49 . . . Rb2+ 50 Kg3 a3 51 Ra7 Kb4 52 f4 a2 53 Re4+ Kb3 54 h4 b5 55 Ra8 b4 56 Re5 Kc4 57 Kg4 Rg2+ 58 Kf3 Rf2+ 59 Kg4 b3 60 Re4+ Kd3 White resigns.

No. 9 (p.33).

. . . passive defence. It consisted in maintaining the status quo, and in particular in preventing the . . . b4 breakthrough. For this both white knights and the dark-square bishop should have remained on their present squares, and 21 Bf3 followed by Kg2 can be recommended, preparing a possible g3-g4.

Instead of this in the game **Biyiasas - Ljubojevic,** Petropolis Interzonal, 1973, White played more aggressively:

21 Nf2?	**b4!**
22 cxb4	**cxb4**
23 Nxb4	**Nxb4**
24 Bxb4	**Bxb2**

That is why the knight should not have been moved from d1.

25 Re2	**Bd4**
26 e5	**d5**
27 Rc1?	

Another 'active' move (to an open file), whereas what was required was the passive defence of the bishop blocking the b-file. Now Black makes an accurately calculated exchange sacrifice.

27 . . .	**Rxb4!**
28 axb4	**Na7**
29 Rc7	

29 Rec2 Nb5 30 Rc8+ Bxc8 31 Rxc8+ Kd7 32 Rxh8 would have failed to 32 . . . a3 33 Ra8 Na7.

29 . . .	**Nb5**
30 Rb7	**Ke7**
31 Ra2	**Nc3**

Only not 31 . . . a3 32 Rxb5.

32 Ra3 Ra8

This is stronger than winning a piece by 32 . . . Nd1.

33 Kf1 Kd8

Trapping the white rook, although 33 . . . Nb1 34 Ra2 a3 would also have won.

34 Bf3 Kc8 35 Rxd7 Kxd7 36 Nd1 Nb1 37 Ra2 Kc6, after which Black picked up the b4 pawn with his king and won easily.

No. 10 (p.64).

Undoubtedly the one involving an exchange sacrifice — 12 . . . hxg5 13 Qxh8 Qxd4, when Black has at least equal chances.

But in the game **Belyavsky - Portisch,** Thessaloniki Olympiad, 1984, after **12 . . . g6?! 13 Nge4! Bg7** (the queen cannot be taken because of the unusual smothered mate by the knight from f6) **14 Qg4 Nf5 15 Be3** White managed to securely reinforce his d4 pawn and retain prospects of an attack on the kingside.

The game continued: **15 . . . Nd5 16 Nxd5 Qxd5 17 Nc3 Qd7 18 Rfd1 Rd8 19 Rac1 O—O 20 Bxf5 gxf5 21 Qh4**

Here Black thought it best to give up a pawn to provoke the exchange of queens.

21 . . . f6

Or 21 . . . Kh7 22 Bg5 Rde8 23 Ne2 Rg8 24 Nf4 Bf8 25 Nh5 with decisive threats.

22 Bxh6 Bxh6
23 Qxh6 Qg7
24 Qxg7+ Kxg7

Even so, Black was unable to save the game.

No. 11 (p.64).

And in the game **Sveshnikov - Adorjan,** Sarajevo, 1983, he made excellent use of it!

27 . . . Rd1!

The way to save the game is by activity. 27 . . . Qe4 would have parried the threat of 28 h6 — 28 . . . Qd4, but then 28 hxg6 would have won.

28 h6

28 Rxd1 is decisively met by 28 . . . Qxd1+ 29 Kh2 Qd4.

28 . . . Rxf1+
29 Kh2 Rh1+!
30 Kg3

Capturing the rook would have allowed the queen to give check and then switch to d4.

30 . . . Rxh6
31 Bd6

There is a new threat of capturing on f7, which 31 . . . Nd8 does not parry because of 32 Qe7.

31 . . . Qxf3+!

But now it is all over: White has nothing left with which to attack.

32 gxf3 Rh5 33 b4 Rf5, and Black soon won.

No. 12 (p.64).

White has not only a way of saving the game, but even of winning! In **Uhlmann - Pähtz,** Halle, 1984, he destroyed the opponent's attacking power in one go, and the weakness of the back rank proved decisive.

37 Qxc8+!! Bxc8 38 exd3 Qxf3+ 39 Bg2 Resigns.

No. 13 (p.65).

That is what Black did in the game **Kasparov - Gheorghiu,** Moscow, 1981, and in doing so he made . . . a serious mistake. This is how the World Champion himself commented on this incident:

"Black aims at any price for the exchange of queens, not taking into account the difficulties of the coming endgame. It was here that he should have played actively with 31 . . . Qe7, reminding White that his king has become too exposed over the last few moves. In the variation 32 Rxc6 Bxc6 33 g5 Rf5 34 Qe3 hxg5 35 hxg5 Qf7 Black has counterplay sufficient for a draw."

Indeed, in the event of 36 Be5 Black activates his bishop with the pawn sacrifice 36 . . . d4! and creates the threat of invading with his queen at h1.

But in the game his position rapidly deteriorated.

32 Rxc6 Qxe5
33 Bxe5 Bxc6
34 Rc1 Bb7
35 h5

Black's kingside is blockaded, and the white pieces are much more active.

35 . . . Rf8
36 Rc7 Rf7
37 Rc3!

Now 37 . . . Rf8, with the idea of wresting the c-file, no longer works because of 38 Ra3, and the black rook will be tied to the defence of the a7 pawn.

37 . . . Kh7
38 Kf2 g6

Here, by continuing 38 Ke3 gxh5 39 gxh5, White would have retained every chance of winning: he could have advanced his pawns to a4 and b4, placed his king at d4, and by Rc7 transposed into a won ending with opposite-colour bishops. This could have been the consequence of Black's incorrect choice of passive defence instead of active.

No. 14 (p.74).

We find a reply, exhaustive in its completeness, in the commentary by **Aron Nimzowitsch,** playing Black against **Leonhardt,** San Sebastian, 1912.

"White's e-pawn is to be blocked: it is, however, by no means indifferent whether this blockade is effected by knight or bishop. The latter would be inelastic, and its range of action small, at best as far as g4 (should White play *g2-g4* to attack the opposing pawn majority), while it would be more attackable, e.g. by a knight at c5, which could not be driven off. On the other hand a knight at e6 would be not only an excellent, because unassailable, blockader, but also a very aggressive one, among other things preparing the way for . . . g5. It is often of the greatest importance to find the right blockading piece" . . .

Hence a decision which is now understandable.

12 . . .	**g6!**
13 Na4!	**Ng7**
14 Qd2	**Qd7**

In order to play the rook at d8 as soon as possible.

15 Qa5	**Ne6**
16 Rad1	**Rd8**
17 Nc5?	

"A positional mistake. White should seek to keep the knight as a potential blockader, or at any rate only exchange it for the opponent's knight . . . 17 Bc5 was the right move" (Nimzowitsch).

17 . . .	**Bxc5**
18 Bxc5	**Bb7**

Later Black sacrificed a pawn at a convenient moment by . . . c5, activated his light-square bishop, and after painstaking preparation (the rooks were posted at g7 and g8) of the thematic advance . . . g5, he concluded the game with a direct attack on the king. All 40 moves of the game are given in Nimzowitsch's book *My System.*

No. 15 (p.74).

There is no doubt that the pawn should be blockaded, since then the white pieces, in particular the rooks, will be restricted to the first two ranks. But this should have been done by 19 . . . Bf5! followed by the establishment at e4 of one of the minor pieces (the exchange *20 Bxf5 Qxf5!* does nothing to ease White's difficulties).

But in the game **Utemov - Kaidanov,** Moscow, 1980, the immediate 'blockading' move **19 . . . Ne4?** allowed White to lift the blockade by **20 Bxe4! Qxe4 21 Ng5** (it will be remembered that the queen is the worst blockader, since it is forced to withdraw after an attack by a less valuable enemy piece) and completely seize the initiative.

21 . . . Qe7
22 e4

The picture has immediately changed. Rephrasing a saying by grandmaster Tartakower, it can be said that at e3 the pawn was pitiful, at e4 it is proud, and if it should advance to e5 it will become aggressive. Moreover it cannot now be blockaded at e4: the e5 square can be occupied only by a heavy piece, which can always be attacked by the knight.

22 . . . Be6 23 Qf4 Rad8 24 Rf1 Qd6 25 Qh4 h5 26 Rf2 Rd7 27 Raf1 Kg7 28 Kh1 Qe5 29 Rf4 Rf8 30 Nf3

A graphic illustration of what was said earlier.

30 . . . Qc3
31 e5

White has a very strong attack, and he went on to win the game.

No. 16 (p.74).

Of course, in a blocked centre. In the diagram this could have been achieved by 13 . . . fxe4 14 fxe4 Rxf1+ 15 Kxf1 e5! 16 Nf3 Nf7 with approximate equality.

But in the first game of the **Yusupov - Timman** Candidates Match, Tilburg, 1986, **13 . . . Qe7?! 14 e5 Nf7 15 f4 g5 16 d5!** led to an obvious advantage for White.

No. 17 (p.88).

In the game **Polugayevsky-Seirawan,** Toluca Interzonal Tournament, 1982, White played **40 f3! gxh2+ 41 Kh1,** after which his king felt fine and he was able to advance his d-pawn. The continuation was **41 . . . Kh8 42 d6 Nf6 43 Qf5 Qa7 44 Qc5!** (it is essential not to blunder into the mate at g1, and the h2 pawn has to be preserved!) **44 . . . Qa4 45 Rde1 Qa2 46 Rxf6! Rxf6 47 d7 Rg8 48 Qd4 Kg7 49 Bc4** (49 d8=Q? Rxd8 50 Qxd8 Qf2), and Black resigned.

No. 18 (p.88).

It turns out that the second alternative would not have been so terrible for Black (**Dvoretsky - Mikhail Tseitlin,** Moscow, 1972): 23 . . . Kxd7! 24 Bxe6++ Kxe6 25 Qd6+ Kf5

26 Qd7+ Ke4 27 Re1+ Re3 28 Qb7+ Kd4 29 Rd1+ Kc4 *(29 . . . Kc3 30 Qb3* mate) 30 Qxf7+ Kb5 31 Rb1+ Qb4!, and things are far from clear . . . Indeed, a pursued king is sometimes capable of miracles, and however fearful its journey may appear, its resourcefulness should always be borne in mind.

No. 19 (p.88).

We continue Lasker's commentary: "The move actually made, and the only one to save the game (which ended in a draw) was **33 Kf1!,** against which Black must play very cautiously not to be at a disadvantage — any too violent attack will fail" . . .

Indeed, in the 18th game of the **Steinitz - Lasker** World Championship Match, USA, 1894, the king took upon itself the defence of the possible invasion square e1, moved out of possible combinational blows, and freed the queen from its defensive duties. White's pieces immediately became more 'compact', and he was already threatening 34 Qe3 and the unequivocal 35 f4.

However, Black too rose to the occasion.

33 . . . Rc5!
34 Qe3 Rd5

At just the right time.

35 Rxd5 Qxd5
36 Nc3 Qc6
37 Kf2

The same tactics: White's king will itself take care of his defensive weaknesses.

Later, it is true, White blundered away a pawn, but Black . . . failed to exploit this gift of fate. On the 61st move the game ended in a draw.

No. 20 (p.101).

The blitz game **Geller - Gufeld** showed that the position has another solution. By **2 . . . Rc4!!** Black took control of the main avenue of attack — the 4th rank, and White resigned. The rook is immune *(3 Rxc4 Qxe1* mate, or *3 dxc4 Qxe4* and after 3 Re3 Rg4 the attack is parried.

No. 21 (p.101).

But on the other hand **37 . . . f5+!!** wins, as in fact occurred in the game **Koblentz - Moiseyev,** Riga, 1955. It is obvious that after both 38 Kxf5 and 38 Kxh3 the pawn queens with check, while the capture en passant by 38 gxf6 blocks the f-file for White's attack on the newborn queen, and after 38 . . .

f1=Q the discovered check is no longer to be feared. Therefore White resigned.

No. 22 (p.102).

In the first instance he should have assessed the position. The pawn outpost at e4 enables Black to count on a kingside attack. The 'observation' of h2 by his bishop simply demanded that its scope be reduced and that 14 g3 be played, so as only after 14 . . . h5 to begin the bishop manoeuvre — 15 Bf1 h4 16 Bg2, when the pressure on the e4 pawn restricts the development of Black's initiative.

But after the move played in **Spassov - Panchenko,** Sochi, 1980, White was crushed.

14 . . . Bxh2+ 15 Kxh2 Ng4+ 16 Kg3 Qd6+ 17 f4 exf3+ 18 Kxf3 Qf6+ 19 Ke2 Rxe3+ White resigns.

No. 23 (p.102).

By **41 . . . Kd3!** (41 . . . e5, with the same idea, loses to 42 Ke2 Kxc3 43 Kd1!), as occurred in the correspondence game **Lopukhin-Latash,** 1981. Now White fails to win by 42 h5 e5 43 g6 e4+ 44 Kf4 hxg6 45 hxg6 e3 46 g7 e2 47 g8=Q e1=Q, and so he prevents the advance of the central passed pawn.

42 Kf4 Kxc3!

Having lured the king to f4, Black can now permit himself this capture. The point of his previous move becomes clear a little later.

43 h5 b4
44 g6 hxg6
45 hxg6

It turns out that the main threat of 45 h6, with the idea of queening with check and winning, is parried by interference on the long dark-square diagonal — 45 . . . b3 46 h7 e5+! This was the reason for Black's 41st move.

The remainder was clear:

45 . . . b3 46 g7 b2 47 g8=Q b1=Q 48 Qxe6 Qc1+ 49 Qe3+ Qxe3+ 50 Kxe3

Draw: only the 'bare' kings are left on the board!

No. 24 (p.109).

He certainly was, and he was wrongly criticized for this by **Alekhine,** playing Black, who overlooked that his opponent **Euwe** (Zurich, 1934) could effectively and prettily escape from the resulting pin.

31 Nf7! Qe8

It transpires that Black has no choice: in the event of 31

. . . Kxf7 32 Qh5+ Ke7 33 Rxe6+ Kxe6 34 Re1+ he is mated in three moves — 34 . . . Kd6 35 Qc5+ Kd7 36 Qf5+ Kd6 37 Qe6 mate.

32 Rxe6 Qxe6
33 Nd8 Qe4
34 Nxc6

For the lost pawn Black has not the slightest compensation, and although the game continued for a further twenty moves, White won.

No. 25 (p.110).

What follows is that in the game **Chigorin - Mason,** Hannover, 1902, White could have won immediately by 35 Nh5!, when after 35 . . . Qxh4 the freed knight supports mate by the pawn — 36 g7, while 35 . . . Qd7 36 Qg3! also leads to mate.

But the game went **35 Rfh5??,** and after **35 . . . Qxf6 36 Rxh7+ Bxh7 37 Rxh7+ Kg8** White resigned.

No. 26 (p.110).

And wrongly so: in the game **Monostory - Florian,** Hungary, 1950, the knight 'ran away'!

16 . . . Nxg3!!
17 Bxd5 Nxe2+
18 Kg2 Bxd5+
19 f3 Nxc1

The queen has been regained, White is two pawns down, and already here he could have resigned with a 'clear conscience'.

No. 27 (p.119).

It is not too complicated, but elegant.

43 . . . Rxc2!
44 Kxc2 Ke6!
45 Bxb6 Bb4!

By sacrificing a pawn, Black (**Taimanov - Farago,** Budapest, 1982) has as it were encaged the white bishop, which is unable to break through the barricade. On the 60th move the game ended in a draw.

No. 28 (p.120).

By constructing a fortress with the natural move 34 f4! The black king is deprived of the key square e5 and of the possibility of penetrating to the kingside, since the white king will take up a post at f3.

In the 21st game of the **Spassky - Fischer** World Championship Match, Reykjavik, 1972, White missed this chance.

34 Kf3? Ra1

With the threat of 35 . . . Rg1 and the advance of the h-pawn.

35 Kg2 Ke5
36 Be6 Kf4
37 Bd7

With the idea of 38 b4 Rb1 39 b5 Ra1 40 b6.

37 . . . Rb1
38 Be6 Rb2
39 Bc4 Ra2!

The greedy 39 . . . Kxf5? 40 a5 Ra2 41 a6 would have tied the black rook to White's far-advanced pawn.

40 Be6 h5
41 Bd7

Here the game was adjourned, and White resigned without resuming. He has no antidote to the obvious 41 . . . Kg4 followed by the advance of the h-pawn and the winning of the f2 pawn.

No. 29 (p.120).

In general, an obvious one. The board is, so to speak, partitioned off by the pawn chains, the doubled white d-pawns (especially the d3 pawn) serve as excellent guards and prevent the black king from breaking through, and the white bishop, although restricted by the enemy passed pawn, is able to cover the 'staging' post b4. So that for White to complete his fortress it only remained for him to block the position on the kingside, which could have been achieved almost immediately by 34 g4! and then h2-h3.

But in the game **Kurajica - Karpov,** Skopje, 1976, White did not dare to place his pawns on the same colour squares as the enemy bishop, and he timidly played **34 g3.** After this he marked time and allowed his opponent to advance his pawns to f5 and g5 supported by his king at h5, and in the end, after a further mistake, he lost the game.

No. 30 (p.120).

On no account! Since he can go into a different ending — with two bishops against a queen, where the bishops harmoniously defend the fortress!

62 Rxc7! Qxc7
63 Bxc7 b2
64 Kh2 b1=Q
65 Be5

It is as though the two bishops cut the board in half, and the black king is unable to penetrate into the enemy position via the queenside. But the path via g4 will be blocked by the white king, by moving at the necessary moment to h3. The pawn

break . . . g5 also fails to achieve its aim; White can exchange twice on g5 and retreat his bishop to f4, or, as occurred in the game, after exchanging on g5 with the h-pawn, calmly await the advance . . . g4.

The game **Sveshnikov - Psakhis,** Zonal Tournament, Yerevan, 1982, continued up to move 88 and ended in a draw.

No. 31 (p.133).

It was that, in order to try and win more quickly, Black might be tempted by a general exchange — **37 . . . Qxf3+ 38 Qxf3 Ra3,** after which the b-pawn cannot be prevented from queening. But **39 Kh4!! Rxf3** leads to stalemate!

This was in fact the conclusion to the game **Horowitz - Pavey,** USA, 1951.

No. 32 (p.133).

It consisted of continuing to pursue the bishop at h7. The game **Semenova - Levitina,** Women's Final Candidates Match, Sochi, 1984, continued **46 . . . gxf5 47 gxf5 f6!.** and after **48 Bg6 Bf7 49 Bxf7 Rxf7 50 e6 Rh7+ 51 Kg1 Rc6 52 Rc2 Rg7** a position arose in which White's extra pawn was of no essential importance. On move 69 the players agreed a draw.

No. 33 (p.133).

It was only that the trap prepared by a schoolboy from Chelyabinsk in the Urals, now International Master **S. Dvoiris,** for the then World Champion **Boris Spassky** proved truly devilish: **29 Bc4+!! Rxc4** (after 29 . . . Qxc4 30 Rxd8+ Black either loses his queen or is mated) **30 Rxd8+ Kf7 31 Qxf5+ Qf6 32 Re7+!,** and without waiting for the tragic finish 32 . . . Kxe7 33 Qd7 mate, Black resigned.

No. 34 (p.142).

All apart from the last one — **38 Rh6! Rxh6 39 h8=Q+ Rxh8 40 b5,** when in the game **Marshall - Klua,** USA, 1923, the players agreed a draw, since if Black releases the white king from stalemate by 40 . . . Rd7 41 cxd7 c5, then . . . he loses after 42 bxc6 Kb8 43 Kxb6 Rc8 44 c7+.

No. 35 (p.142).

The way that she played in the game **Gotseva - Kurbanova,** Tashkent, 1974. The immediate elimination of the pawn — **54 . . . Bxa7?** allowed

the white queen to become a 'desperado' — **55 Qxf7+!** The preliminary 54 . . . Qc1+ would have forced immediate capitulation.

No. 36 (p.142).

The dream came true! In the game **Mindadze - Kalugin,** USSR, 1978, there followed **37 Bd3!! Qxd3** (of course, Black immediately saw the point, but . . . if he gives the white king some freedom by 37 . . . Rh1+ 38 Kxh1 Qxd3, retaining a material advantage and threatening mate in two moves, it is White who goes onto the attack: 39 Qe8+ Kg7 40 Qe7+ leads to perpetual check, and 39 . . . Kf5 40 Qd7+ Ke4?? to . . . mate — 41 Qxg4) **38 h5+ Kh6** (or 38 . . . Kxh5 39 Qxh7+!) **39 Qg7+!** (accuracy is always necessary: here 39 Qxh7+ would have been a terrible mistake because of 39 . . . Kxh7 40 h6 Kg8 41 h7+ Qxh7 mate; the move played is the quickest) **39 . . . Kxg7 40 h6+,** and whether or not Black takes the pawn, all the same it is stalemate.

No. 37 (p.143).

But in doing so (**Grefe - Biyiasas,** USA Open Championship, 1974) he forgot that the invasion of the back rank deprives the black king of its last freedom.

40 . . . Nf4+ 41 Bxf4 Rxf4 42 Rd8 Rg4+! 43 Qxg4 Qg3+!, and it is stalemate after the capture of the 'desperado' queen.

No. 38 (p.143).

For the time being, at any rate, it is quite ethical. Since after **68 Rh1 Kd7 69 Kb6 Kc8 70 c6 Kb8 71 c7+ Kc8** White has the chance **72 Ra1** (if 72 Rd1 or 72 Rf1, then 72 . . . Rh8) and in reply to the natural 72 . . . h1=Q — 73 Ra8+!! Qxa8 with stalemate!

True, in the game **Kholmov - Ehlvest,** Volgodonsk, 1984, Black saw through the trap and played **72 . . . h1=B!,** after which White could now have resigned with a clear conscience . . .

No. 39 (p.151).

Yes, Black loses his rook, but not the game after the variation pointed out by the famous chess composer A. Troitsky: 2 . . . Kg6! 3 Bxe5 Kh5 4 Kg2 Kg4, when . . . f4 and the exchange of the last pawn cannot be prevented.

Paradoxically, there is also another way to draw, although a more complicated one.

Perhaps you would like to find it yourself? . . .

No. 40 (p.151).

Alas, he did not know it, and in the game **Najdorf - Kamara,** Mar del Plata, 1961, he resigned, reckoning that the a-pawn would cost him his bishop. This is so, but he can save the game by exchanging the kingside pawns, which is achieved by 36 . . . Kf4 37 Be2 Ke3 38 Bd1 Kd2 39 Ba4 Ke3 40 Bc6 (otherwise a repetition of moves; defending the f-pawn from the rear has not succeeded, and the advance of the black pawn to g4 cannot be prevented) 40 . . . Kf4 41 Kc3 g5 42 Kd2 g4 with a draw.

No. 41 (p.152).

The initial moves in this position are forced (*60 . . . Kg8* loses immediately to *61 h6! gxh6 62 Rb7 Ra4 63 a7*), but in chess, in contrast to draughts (chequers), capturing is not obligatory: 63 . . . Kg6! would have parried the the threat of h6-h7 and led to a draw. How **Parma** (Black) could overlook this in his game with **Polugayevsky,** USSR v. Yugoslavia, Zagreb, 1965, was incomprehensible!

No. 42 (p.169).

In this position from the game **Vajda - Kotov,** Moscow v. Budapest, 1949, the centre is in a state of dynamic equilibrium. The primary task of each side should have been concerned with the centre, and with this in mind White should have first neutralized any possible counterblows here. In particular, he should have prevented his knight from being driven from c3 by playing 14 a3.

White's premature activity on the flank allows Black to gain the advantage in the centre and to begin a counter-attack.

14 . . . b4
15 Ne2

After 15 Na4 White cannot hope to invade at b6: 15 . . . Rdb8 16 Qf2 Bd8, and the threat of 17 . . . Ne7 is extremely unpleasant.

15 . . . e5

Creating a typical pawn formation for further counterblows: black pawns at d6 and e5 against a white pawn at e4 (cf., for example, the Rauzer-Botvinnik game given earlier, p.160).

16 f5

After 16 g5 Ng4 17 Bxg4

Bxg4 18 f5 d5 19 f6 Bf8 White's position collapses.

16 . . . d5!
17 g5

White should have gone in for simplification — 17 exd5 e4 18 dxc6 exf3 19 cxd7 fxe2 20 Qxe2 Rxd7, although even in this case the position of his king gives serious cause for alarm.

17 . . . Nxe4
18 Bxe4 dxe4
19 f6 Bf8
20 fxg7 Bxg7
21 Qh4 Ne7

Not for defensive purposes, but with the intention of strengthening the counter-attack by 22 . . . Nf5.

22 Ng3 Ng6
23 Qh5 Qc8!

Here we can take stock: White's attack is exhausted, whereas Black concludes his counterattack begun in the centre with play on the weakened light squares.

24 Qe2 Bg4

The white king is being pursued, and so the win of the exchange by 24 . . . Bb5 can be disregarded.

25 Qf2 Bf3+
26 Kg1 Nf4
27 Bxf4 exf4
28 Nxe4

Otherwise the queen move to g4 is decisive.

28 . . . Bxe4 29 Qxf4 Bg6
White resigns.

No. 43 (p.169).

The pawn structure, which has already ben mentioned, and the basic demands of strategy themselves give an answer to the question. Therefore in the game **Shabanov - Solovyev,** Sverdlovsk, 1969, there followed:

14 . . . d5!
15 exd5 e4!
16 Bg2

16 Nxe4 Nxe4 17 Bxe4 Nf6 would also have given Black excellent prospects.

16 . . . Nxd5
17 Nxe4 Rae8
18 g5

White should have already been thinking of defence, by playing 18 Qf2, but this would have meant admitting the failure of his flank attack against the king.

18 . . . Bd6
19 Qh5 Rxe4!

The concluding blow in the centre, which conclusively hands the initiative to Black. It is now the white king which is under attack.

20 Bxe4 N5f6 21 gxf6 Nxf6 22 Qh3 Nxe4 23 Nd4 Qc4 24

Qd3 Qd5 25 Nb3 Qc6 26 Qf3 Qxc2 27 Bd2 Nc5 White resigns.

No. 44 (p.169).

In the game **Treybal - Alekhine,** Pistyan, 1922, Black carried out a counterattack in the centre:

22 . . .	**c5**
23 h4	**d5!**
24 g5	

On the one hand — a continuation of his plan, but on the other hand — an enforced decision, sine both 24 exd5 Bd6+ 25 Bf4 Re8 26 Qg2 Bxf4+ 27 Rxf4 Qb8 28 Qf3 Qe5! and 24 e5 Qb8! (but not *24 . . . fxe5 25 Qxe5 Bxh4 26 g5! Re8 27 Qf4 Be1 28 f6,* when White has a strong attack) 25 Bf4 fxe5 26 Bxe5 Bd6 are clearly to Black's advantage.

24 . . .	**dxe4**
25 dxe4	**Qc6**
26 Kh3	**c4**
27 e5	

In Alekhine's words: "White attempts the impossible to obtain the semblance of an attack, but in vain, for Black gets there first".

27 . . .	**d3**
28 Qe1	**fxe5**
29 Qxe5	**Bb4!**
30 bxc4	**bxc4**
31 Qd4	**Qb5!**

And with the threats of 32 . . . Rxf5 and 32 . . . d2! followed by 33 . . . c3, by very subtle play Black overcame his opponent's resourceful resistance.

No. 45 (p.170).

White has wasted a considerable amount of time, but until the last move the approximate equality on the board had not yet been disturbed. However, White should not have persisted in carrying out her plan. By continuing 13 d4, she would have been the first to strike at the centre, simultaneously extending the scope of her light-square bishop and threatening the possible closure of the centre *(d4-d5).* The move in the game allowed Black (in **Gaprindashvili - Chiburdanidze,** World Championship Match, Pitsunda, 1978) to begin a counterattack.

13 . . .	**d5!**
14 Qe2	**Re8**
15 b3	**Qd7**
16 g4	**Rad8**
17 Rd1	**Qc6**

Black is splendidly mobilized, stands more actively in the centre, and now begins to harass White in real earnest.

18 Bd2 Nf4

Even stronger was 18 . . . dxe4 19 dxe4 Rxd2! 20 Nxd2 (*20 Qxd2* loses quickly to *20 . . . Nxe4 21 Bxe4 Qxe4 22 N3h4 Bxf5 23 Nxf5 Nf4 24 Ne3 Qf3*, when Black's counterattack achieves its aim) 20 . . . Qxc3 21 Qd3! Qc5 22 Ne3 Nf4 23 Qf1 h5 with dangerous threats.

19 Qf1

In the event of 19 Bxf4 exf4 Black's pressure on the e4 pawn and along the e-file is strengthened decisively.

19 . . . Bxf5?

This throws away Black's advantage. The logical conclusion of the attack in the centre would have been 19 . . . Nxd3! 20 Bxd3 dxe4 21 Nxe5 Qd5! 22 Bf4 exd3 23 Rxd3 Qe4! with a serious initiative, since White's pieces are 'hanging', and the position of her king is markedly weakened.

The game continued:

20 exf5 e4
21 dxe4 dxe4
22 Bxf4 Rxd1
23 Rxd1 exf3
24 Re1!

By sacrificing a pawn White provokes the exchange of rooks, after which the game ended in a draw on move 42.

No. 46 (p.176).

In the given position delay will prove fatal, and the game **Pillsbury - Lasker,** St. Petersburg, 1896, continued:

16 . . . Rac8
17 f5 Rxc3!
18 fxe6

After 18 bxc3 Qxc3 White would have had to agree to 19 Qf3 Qxf3 20 gxf3 Bxf5+ 21 Bd3 Bh3 with a much inferior ending, since 19 fxe6 Qb4+ 20 Kc2 (or *20 Ka1 Rc8 21 Qg4 Rc2*) 20 . . . Rc8+ 21 Kd3 Qxd4+ loses immediately.

18 . . . Ra3!

"The time which we have is more precious than the pieces we give up" — this saying by Mikhail Tal is particularly applicable both to the given position, and to the way of conducting attacks on opposite flanks.

19 exf7+ Rxf7
20 bxa3 Qb6+
21 Bb5!

The only defence, although against accurate play by Black even it would not have saved the game. White would have lost quickly after 21 Kc2 Rc7+ 22 Kd2 Qxd4+ 23 Bd3 Rc2+!! 24 Kxc2 Qb2 with a classic epaulette mate!

21 . . . Qxb5+
22 Ka1 Rc7?

In time trouble Black misses the simplest win — 22 . . . Qc4 with an irresistible attack on d4. Later, after a mistake in reply by White, the World Champion nevertheless mated his opponent on move 32.

No. 47 (p.176).

There is a vulnerable point in White's position at d3. In addition, he will be obliged to spend a tempo on castling, and of necessity on the kingside. In the game **Ryzhkov - Zhelnin,** Leningrad, 1978, this allowed Black, at the cost of a pawn, to open up the game precisely on the kingside.

11 . . . f4!
12 exf4 exf4
13 Bxf4

Capturing on f4 with the knight would have left White facing difficult problems after 13 . . . Re8+.

13 . . . Bf5
14 Rd1 Ng4
15 O—O g5

Securing e5 for his knight and intending in advance to undermine White's outpost at e4.

16 Be3 Ne5
17 Ne4

After 17 Bxc5 dxc5 18 Ne4 Bg4 Black would have successfully continued his attack on the light squares.

17 . . . Nexd3
18 f3

White should have returned the pawn by 18 Nxc5 Nxc5 19 Qd2, although even here after 19 . . . Ne4 Black stands more actively.

18 . . . g4!
19 fxg4

Or 19 Bxc5 Bxe4 20 fxe4 Nxc5, and White, in order to activate his bishop, must immediately sacrifice a pawn with 21 e5.

19 . . . Bxe4
20 Rxf8+ Qxf8
21 Bxe4 Nb4
22 Qb1 Nxe4
23 Rf1

23 Qxe4 is also bad in view of 23 . . . Re8 24 Qf4 Qe7, winning a piece.

23 . . . Qe7
24 Qxb4 Nc3!

White resigns. And although the counterattack concluded on one of the central files, the cause of White's defeat was the 'exposure' of his king.

No. 48 (p.200).

He has, and in the game **Taimanov - Karpov,** 41st USSR Championship, Moscow, 1973, he did so by:

17 . . . Rc4!

18 Qxa7 Qc6
19 Qa3 Rc8

In just three moves the character of the position has changed radically. At the cost of his a-pawn Black has built up very strong pessure on the c-file, the bishop at d2 is condemned to a defensive role, White's pawn centre is blocked, and the e4 and d5 squares are in Black's possession. It is instructive to follow how calmly and methodically the future World Champion manoeuvres, all the time keeping his opponent 'on the ropes'.

20 h3 h6

The immediate 20 . . . Nd5 is also possible, but Black has no reason to hurry.

21 Rb1 Ra4
22 Qb3 Nd5
23 Rdc1 Rc4
24 Rb2 f6!

Simply regaining the pawn with a minimal advantage in the endgame does not come into Black's plans! Here one of the principles of counter-attack (and of attack) is clearly seen: do not be in a hurry to restore material equality, since this is not the aim of the sacrifice.

25 Re1 Kf7
26 Qd1

White is ready at any moment to buy Black off with the c3 pawn, and hopes to display some kind of activity on the light-squares on the kingside.

26 . . . Nf8

The 'holes' are sealed beforehand, and this is by no means going onto the defensive.

27 Rb3 Ng6
28 Qb1 Ra8
29 Re4 Rca4
30 Rb2 Nf8
31 Qd3 Rc4

Of course, not 31 . . . Rxa2 32 Rxa2 Rxa2 33 c4.

32 Re1 Ra3
33 Qb1 Ng6
34 Rc1 Nxc3

Exploiting the fact that White cannot simplify the position by exchanges: he loses immediately after 35 Bxc3 Raxc3, with decisive back rank threats.

35 Qd3 Ne2+
36 Qxe2 Rxc1+
37 Bxc1 Qxc1+
38 Kh2 Rxf3!

This second sacrifice, this time for the sake of a counter-attack directly against the king, was envisaged by Karpov when he switched from positional pressure to open piece play.

39 gxf3 Nh4

White lost on time, failing at the board to find a satisfactory defence against the threat of 40 . . . Qg5. Only later, after many days of analysis, was it established that White could have gained saving chances by the counterattack 40 d5!!

No. 49 (p.200).

In the game **Browne - Mecking,** Interzonal Tournament, Manila, 1976, Black immediately repaired all the defects in his position by an exchange sacrifice.

24 . . . Rxc7!
25 dxc7 Qxc7

Black's queen and dark-square bishop are now attacking the opponent's king position, his light-square bishop has acquired freedom, his passed c-pawn may be supported from behind by the rook, and the white knight has no strong point in the centre. All this makes Black's chances preferable.

26 Qc2 Rc8
27 f4

Against the more 'compact' 27 g3 Black would have continued his counterattack with 27 . . . h5.

27 . . . Bd6
28 Qc3 Bb5
29 e5

This weakens the a8-h1 diagonal, but it is hard to recommend anything else, since White's knight and rook are obliged to defend the f4 pawn, and his queen — the a5 pawn.

29 . . . Bc5
30 Ng3 Bc6

Black cannot allow the knight to go to e4. However, White is unable to exploit this factor to return the exchange, since 31 Qxc4 is met not by 31 . . . Bb5 with a probable draw, but by 31 . . . Be3!, when in view of the threat of 32 . . . Bxg2+ the draw for White remains highly problematic. After 32 Ne4 Bxc1 33 Rxc1 Qxa5 he loses a pawn while 33 Qc5 does not work because of 33 . . . Bb7!

31 Rfe1 Qb7
32 Qc2 Bb4
33 Re2 Bd5
34 Ne4 Bxe4
35 Qxe4

On 35 Rxe4 Black had prepared 35 . . . Bd2!, when after 36 Rxc4 (if *36 Rb1*, then *36 . . . Qd5* followed by . . . *c3*, and the roles of the two sides, compared with the initial position of our analysis, are completely reversed) 36

. . . Rxc4 37 Qxc4 Bxc1 38 Qxc1 Qb4 White loses a pawn.

35 . . . Qd5
36 Qc2 Rd8!
37 h3 Qc5

White lost on time, but no satisfactory defence for him is apparent. 38 Qxc4 fails to 38 . . . Rd1+.

No. 50 (p.201).

In fact Black's position in the game **Knezevic - Romanishin,** Kiev, 1978, is lost. White has an enormous lead in development, and the reckless . . . h5 has deprived the black king of any hope of reaching safety.

However, in order to parry Black's temporary initiative, determined typically counter-attacking measures are needed.

18 Rxd4!

By eliminating the 'central attacker', White seizes control in the first instance over the dark squares.

18 . . . exf4

If 18 . . . exd4, then 19 Nd5 O—O 20 h3 Nf6 *(20 . . . d3 21 Qd1)* 21 Ne7+ Kh8 22 e5 with crushing threats.

19 gxf4 O—O
20 Nd5

It only remains for White to drive back the knight from g4, and apart from his extra pawn he will gain excellent attacking chances along the g-file.

20 . . . Qd8
21 e5

A different, but less justified, way of realizing his advantage. By the threat of 22 Nf6+ White provokes the exchange of queens.

21 . . . Qh4
22 f3 Nh6
23 Qf2 Qxf2+

There is no return to d8, and at h3 the queen would all the same have been 'trapped', if only after 24 Ne7+ Kh8 25 Qg3.

24 Kxf2 Nf5
25 Rb4

Strictly speaking, the remainder is a matter of technique.

25 . . . a5 26 Rb6 a4 27 Bc2 Be6 28 Bxf5 Bxd5 29 a3 Bc6 30 Ke3 Rfd8 31 Rc1 Ra5 32 Be4 Kf8 33 Rc4

Intending by Rd4 to suppress even any illusory counterplay.

33 . . . g5
34 Bxc6 bxc6
35 Rxc6

And Black shortly resigned. After 35 . . . gxf4+ 36 Kxf4 Rd2 the simplest is 37 Rc8+ Kg7 38 Rc2.

No. 51 (p.201).

It would have been more circumspect to delay Black's counterplay by first playing 15 a4. In his calculations (in the game **Doroshkevich - Tal,** 43rd USSR Championship, Yerevan, 1975) White overlooked the fact that Black is by no means obliged to swim with the current and go onto the defensive. He has the basis for a counterattack, and the ex-World Champion brilliantly exploits this.

16 ... gxf4!
17 exf6 Rxe3

In an endgame Black would have played 17 . . . fxe3, but in a counterattack it is the pieces which lead.

18 fxg7 Ne5
19 Bg2 Qg5!

Luring the white knight to e4, so as then to exploit its 'hanging' position.

20 Ne4 Qh4
21 Qd2 Kxg7

It would not have been worth spending time on the capture of the pawn, but the rook needs to go to h8.

22 Qf2 Qxf2

The simplest. Black regains the piece, retaining his extra pawn and an active position.

23 Rxf2

Or 23 Nxf2 f3 24 Bh3 Rh8 followed by . . . Re2.

23 ... f3 24 Nxd6 Rd8 25 Nxb7 fxg2+ 26 Kxg2 Rxd5 27 b3 Nd3 28 Rc2 Re1!

Elegantly winning a 'whole' rook. White resigns.

No. 52 (p.201).

Against the deadly check at h7, Black has no other defence than the sacrifice of his queen. But we must give him his due: in the game **Khariton - Rozenberg,** Moscow, 1957, it was on this sacrifice that he based in advance his plan of counterattack, when he boldly eliminated White's queenside pawns.

16 ... Qxg5
17 Qxg5 bxc3

The remainder is understandable. White tries to make a couple more attacking moves, but the black passed pawns decide matters.

18 O—O Nc6 19 h4 f6 20 exf6 Rxf6 21 f4 Ra2 22 Qg3 Nd4 23 Qd3 e5 24 fxe5 Rxf1+ 25 Qxf1 c2 26 Kh2 Nf3+ 27 gxf3 Bf5

And in view of the fact that 28 Qb5 is met by 28 . . . Ra8, White resigned.

No. 53 (p.202).

White has a weak back rank,

and it was on this that the counterattack was based in the game **Gusev - I. Zaitsev,** Kirov, 1974.

35 . . . Qc1+!
36 Rxc1 Rxc1+
37 Bd1 Be4!

White is still capable of attacking, as is seen in the variation 37 . . . Rd8? 38 Nxe7+ Nxe7 39 Rxg7+ Kxg7 40 Qg5+ and 41 Qxc1, winning.

38 Ne3 Rd8
39 h3

Other continuations also fail to save White.

39 . . . Bc2! 40 Nxc2 Rdxd1+ White resigns.

No. 54 (p.202).

In the game **Kushnir - Chiburdanidze,** Womens' Candidates Final, Bad Kissingen, 1978, Black boldly sacrificed her queen.

20 . . . Nxe4!
21 Bxd8 Nxg3
22 fxg3

The threat of 22 . . . Nxe2+ and 23 . . . Bg4 does not allow White to retain the two bishops.

22 . . . Raxd8

Despite White's enormous material advantage (queen for two pieces and a pawn), Black has sufficient counter-chances. In addition, White, shocked by the sharply changed situation, now embarks on an unfortunate regrouping.

23 Qb3 Bc8
24 Rf1

24 Kg2 came into consideration, moving the king off the back rank. In this case on 24 . . . Rd7 White could have replied 25 Qb6, when it is not easy for Black to double rooks on the e-file, since after 25 . . . Rde7 26 Qxd6 Nxc4 27 Bxc4 it is not possible to take on e1 with check.

24 . . . Rd7!
25 Rae1

After 25 Qb6 Rde7! 26 Qxd6 Ng4 27 Bxg4 Bd4+ 28 Kg2 Bxg4 the white king cannot survive.

25 . . . Rde7
26 Kg2 Nd7

Both sides have regrouped, and . . . Black's chances are now better. Even so, on the next move White should not have given up a pawn.

27 Qd1 Bxb2 28 Bg4 Be5 29 Rh1 f5 30 Bf3 Nf6 31 Qd2 Bd7 32 Rh6 Kf7 33 Qg5 Rg8 34 g4

In the hope of 34 . . . fxg4 35 Be4 Nxe4 36 Rxe4, when the black king comes under attack. But the 17-year-old

future World Champion strictly carries out her plan: no exchanges, and no chances for White to open up the game.

34 . . . Rg7

Slow but sure: Black is now protected against an attack along the 7th rank, and 35 . . . fxg4 is threatened.

35 Rf1

The immediate 35 Rh8 is better, in order to parry 35 . . . fxg4 with 36 Be4, when 36 . . . Nxe4 37 Rxe4 Bf5 is not good in view of 38 Rxe5!

35 . . . Bd4
36 Rh8 Ng8
37 Qh4

The opposition of rook at g7, queen and white king prevents White from opening up the game: 37 gxf5?? gxf5.

37 . . . Bf6
38 g5 Be5

On 38 . . . Bd4 White would again have answered as in the game. Her dream is to exchange rooks.

39 Re1

White is afraid of taking a committing decision in time trouble. The rook at h8 merely looks active, and therefore 39 Rh7 would have given better chances.

39 . . . Kf8
40 Re2 Rgf7
41 Qh6+ Rg7

This move was sealed by Black. On the resumption there followed:

42 Re3 b5 43 Ra3 bxc4 44 Rxa6 c3 45 Bd1 Bb5 46 Ra5 Kf7!

The plausible 46 . . . Bd3? is a mistake in view of 47 Ra8+ Kf7 48 Rhxg8! Rxg8 49 Qh7+ Rg7 50 Qh8, mating.

47 Qh3

After 47 Rxg8 Rxg8 48 Rxb5 Rh8! the queen is trapped.

47 . . . Bc4
48 Qf3 Bd4

The black bishops are in their element. Now 49 . . . Re3 and 50 . . . Bxd5+ is threatened.

49 Ra4 Bb5!
50 Rxd4

Black would have won very elegantly after 50 Ra5 Be2!! 51 Bxe2 c2, which would not have worked a move earlier because of Rc4.

50 . . . cxd4

The material advantage is now with Black, and in addition her passed pawns cannot be stopped without further losses. The game is practically decided.

51 Qf4 d3 52 Qxd6 c2 53 Bxc2 dxc2 54 Rh1 Bd3 55

Ra1 Rh7 56 Qg3 Re2+ 57 Kf3 Rhh2 58 a4 Be4+ 59 Kf4 Bxd5 White resigns.

No. 55 (p.202).

In the game **Ziedinya - Radchenko,** Tallinn, 1984, Black launched a counter-attack with an exchange sacrifice:

25 . . . Rxc5! 26 dxc5 Qxc5 27 Re1 Qc3 28 Kf2 Bxb3 29 Bxb3 Qxb3 30 Ree2 Qc3 31 Rec2 Qxc2+ 32 Rxc2 Rxc2+ 33 Ke1 Rc3 34 Qg2 Rxa3?!

34 . . . Rc1+ 35 Kd2 Rc2+! would have been immediately decisive, but even in the game Black won easily after picking up the e3 pawn.

No. 56 (p.210).

Nevertheless in the game **Ivell - Belyavsky,** London, 1985, there followed:

33 . . . Nb3+
34 Kc2 Na1+!

Saving the game — by diverting the white rook. After 35 Rxa1 Qa4+ it is Black who gives mate, while otherwise he has perpetual check, since 35 Kb1 is bad because of 35 . . . Rd1+.

35 Kc1 Nb3+ 36 Kc2 Na1+ Draw agreed.

No. 57 (p.211).

Only for a counterattack, based on decoy! White's idea in the game **Leonhardt - Tarrasch,** Berlin, 1920, was very fine.

51 Rh1 Rxg3+
52 Bf3!!

In this way the black rook is prevented from returning to the g-file to the defence of its king.

52 . . . Rxf3+
53 Kc2 Rf2+
54 Kd1

White avoids the repetition, since he is now dreaming of winning!

54 . . . Rf1+!

An answering blow on the same theme!

55 Rxf1 Qa3! 56 Rf2 Qd3+ 57 Kc1 Qc3+ Drawn.

No. 58 (p.211).

They consist of a counter-attack, in which for 10 decisive moves the white queen is out of play. To put his plan into practice, in the game **Balashov - Polugayevsky,** Interzonal Tournament, Manila, 1976, Black played

22 . . . Bb7!

Simultaneously parrying the capture dxe6 and aiming at the seemingly well defended

white king.

23 Qxh7 Bxd5!
24 Qxh6 Rb8

White is the exchange and two pawns up, but without his queen he cannot parry the counterattack!

25 Rd2 Bxa2+
26 Kc1

26 Kxa2 (or *26 Ka1*) is decisively met by 26 . . . Qa5, with or without check.

26 . . . Rc8+ 27 Rc2 Rxc2+ 28 Kxc2 Qc4+ 29 Kd2 Qb4+ 30 Ke2 Bc4+ 31 Kd1 Qxb2

Again the threat of mate by 32 . . . Bb3 does not allow the white queen time to escape from imprisonment.

32 Re5

On any other square the rook would again have been lost on the next move.

32 . . . fxe5 33 Qg5+ Kd7 White resigns.

No. 59 (p.225).

From the strategic point of view, this position from the game **A. Zaitsev-Shamkovich,** Voronezh, 1959, can be considered lost for White. His queenside pawns are weak, he has a perceptible weakness on the back rank, and the insufficient coordination of his pieces is felt. But from the tactical point of view his attack is rather dangerous: queen, bishop and both rooks are aimed at Black's kingside, which lacks piece support.

With the move in the game White's attack has reached its culmination, and it appears that he will win prettily, e.g. 26 . . . Rcd8 27 Bh7+! Kh8 28 fxg7+ Kxh7 29 Rxh6+! Kxh6 30 Qxf4+ and mate in a few moves, or 26 . . . Nxh3 27 Rxg7+ Kf8 28 Qd6+ and 29 Qxe7 mate, or 26 . . . g6 27 Rxf4 Bxe4 28 Rxh6 Rcd8 29 Rh8+! Kxh8 30 Rh4+ Kg8 31 Rh8+ Kxh8 32 Qh6+, again mating.

But Black was able to disclose the defects of White's position, in particular the weakness of his back rank, by the abrupt

26 . . . g5!

It transpires that on 27 Rxh6 there follows 27 . . . Bxe4 28 Rxg5+ Bg6, when the attack comes to a halt. The finish was:

27 Bh7+ Kxh7 28 Rxg5 Rg8 29 Qc2+ Rg6 30 Rxg6 fxg6 31 Re3 Rd8 32 Re1 Nxg2 33 Re7+ Kh8 White resigns.

No. 60 (p.225).

It is incorrect, for the reason that in the game **Kupreichik - Tukmakov,** Ash-

khabad, 1978, White has a perceptible weakness at e4, for the defence of which he is lacking his light-square bishop. The e4 pawn is essentially defended only by the knight at g3, and it is against this piece that Tukmakov directs his counter-blow in the attacked sector.

15 ... h5!
16 gxh5

White cannot maintain the pawn tension by 16 h3 because of 16 ... h4, while 16 g5 h4 17 gxf6 hxg3 18 hxg3 Qxf6 would have clarified the situation to Black's clear advantage. His king in the centre would have felt quite secure, and a counterattack against the white king would have been not far off.

16 ... Nxh5!

A concrete approach to the position. The tempting 16 ... gxh5, with the threat of 17 ... h4, would have weakened too much the position of the black king. In this case Tukmakov gives a pretty variation: 17 f5 e5 18 Ne6! fxe6 19 fxe6 h4 20 Bg5 Bh6 21 Bxh6 Rxh6 22 Nf5 Bxe4 23 Qxe4! Nxe4 24 Ng7+ Ke7 25 Rf7 mate, although 20 Qf5 is also quite sufficient.

17 f5

Otherwise after the capture on g3 and ... Qf6 Black obtains the position given above.

17 ... exf5
18 Nxf5 gxf5
19 Nxf5

If 19 Qxf5, with attacks on f7 and h5, then by interposing 19 ... Qc7! Black provokes favourable simplification — 20 Rc3 Nxg3 21 hxg3 Qd7 22 Qxd7+ Kxd7 23 Rxf7+ Be7, remaining a piece up.

19 ... Rh7
20 Kb1

Preparing a blow of terrible strength — 21 Bh6!!

20 ... Qc7!
21 Rd2

By 21 Rc3 White would have removed an attack from d6, and in addition, after 21 ... Qd7 he would have been practically unable to avoid the exchange of rooks.

21 ... Qc4
22 Bd4 Qe6
23 Re1 Rc4!

Black is obviously intending to give up his rook for the strong white bishop, for example in reply to 24 b3 — 24 ... Rxd4 25 Nxd4 Qe5 followed by ... Nf6.

24 Qg2 Nf6
25 Bxf6 Qxf6
26 Nxd6+

Nominally restoring the material balance, since he cannot strengthen his position.

26 ... Bxd6
27 Qg8+ Bf8
28 Qxh7 Qh6
29 Qxh6 Bxh6

After the complications, Black's counterattack has led to an endgame where his bishops are potentially stronger than the rook and two pawns. In addition, White was in time trouble for the remainder of the game.

30 Rde2 Ke7
31 b3 Rd4
32 Kb2

On 32 c3 Black would have repied 32 ... Rd2, carrying out the first part of his plan — the exchange of rooks.

32 ... b4
33 c3?

A time trouble mistake, which does not change anything. Against ... Bh6-d2-c3+ followed by the win of the e4 pawn White had no defence.

33 ... Rd2+ 34 Rxd2 Bxd2 35 Re2 bxc3+, and three moves later White lost on time.

No. 61 (p.225).

Since active play on the queenside is too slow, and in organizing it the absence of the light-square bishop from d7 will clearly be felt, in the game **Botvinnik-Polugayevsky,** USSR Spartakiad, Moscow, 1967, Black quite correctly plans a counterattack on the part of the board where White intends an offensive. But he carries out his idea inexactly.

16 ... h5

So as then to play 17 ... Qh4 18 Bg3 Qh3 with the threat of 19 ... h4, but with the excellent move in the game White forces his own — and very significant — corrections to the opponent's plan. Therefore the most serious consideration should have been given to 16 ... g5! 17 Be3 (or *17 Bg3 Ng6* with control of the dark squares) 17 ... g4! with a double-edged game.

17 Kg2!!

The king defends itself, by depriving the black queen of the h3 square. Black is forced to switch to the queenside.

17 ... a6
18 Bb1 Rab8
19 Qe2

The dark-square bishop could also have been withdrawn immediately, to prepare f2-f4.

19 ... Qd7

20 Bd2!

By attacking the knight at a5, White gains a tempo for carrying out his plan.

20 ... b5
21 Nd1

Bad, of course, is 21 Nxb5 axb5 22 Bxa5 b4, when the white bishop is trapped.

21 ... Nb7
22 f4

White then gradually prepared the thematic e4-e5 and converted his positional advantage into a win.

No. 62 (p.226).

It was White's last move which allowed Black in the game **Thomas - Lasker,** Nottingham, 1936, to land a counterblow on the same part of the board, after which the picture changed sharply.

17 ... f5!
18 Nd6

White cannot agree to the opening of the f-file after 18 exf6 Nxf6 or 18 gxf5 Rxf5, since in both cases the black pieces become active and obtain targets to attack.

18 ... fxg4
19 Nd4 Bxd6!

Again a counterattacking move. Going onto the defensive with 19 . . . Ng7 is illogical, and all the same the e6 pawn would have been lost after 20 Nxc8 Qxc8 21 Qb3.

The subsequent events are forced.

20 Nxe6 Bxe6 21 Bxe6+ Kh7 22 exd6 Rxd6 23 Bxg4 Nf6 24 Bf3 Nd5 25 Bxd5 Rxd5

Only the heavy pieces remain on the board, but this does not make things any easier for the white king. In particular, 26 . . . Rf3 with a continuing attack is threatened.

26 f4 Qd7
27 Qe1 Re8
28 e4

This leads to the loss of a pawn, but things are also difficult for White after the possible alternative 28 Rf2 Rd3 29 e4 Qg4+ 30 Kh1 Red8.

28 ... Qg4+
29 Kh1 Rd4
30 e5 Rxf4
31 Qe3

White appears to have activated his game and to be about to seize the initiative, but with a series of accurate moves Lasker continues to attack (or counterattack!) against the king with minimal forces.

31 ... Ref8!
32 Rxf4 Rxf4
33 Re1 Qf5!

34 Kg2

The plausible 34 e6 would have lost immediately to 34 . . . Rf3! 35 Qe2 (or *35 Qd4 Rf1+*) 35 . . . Rf2 36 Qe3 Qd5+ 37 Qe4 Rf1+.

34 . . . Rg4+ 35 Kh1 Qe6 36 Rd1 Rg5 37 Qxa7 Qf7! 38 Qe3 Rxe5! 39 Qxe5 Qf3+ 40 Kg1 Qxd1+ 41 Kf2 Qd7, and on the 55th move Black realized his extra pawn.

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